

YANKEE DOODLE

STORIES OF THE PRESENT WAR.

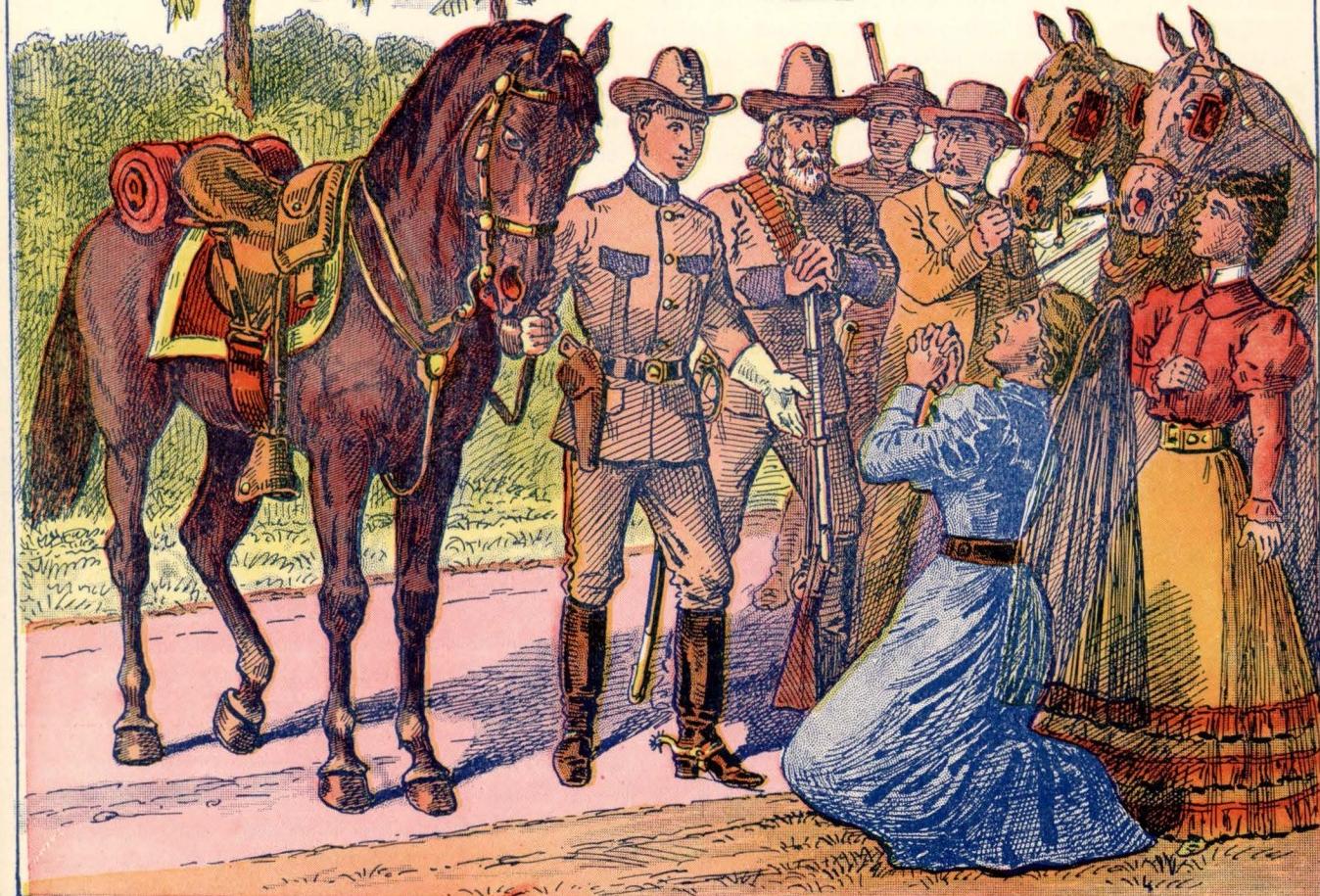
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No. 9.

NEW YORK, AUGUST 31, 1898.

Price 5 Cents.

YANKEE DOODLE AND HIS DEAD SHOTS; —OR— 100 AGAINST 10,000. BY AUTHOR OF "YANKEE DOODLE."



Yankee Doodle quietly waited, and looked on to see how the old man would manage the capture. As he advanced the elder of the two women dropped on her knees before him, calling out piteously: "Spare our lives, Señor Americano!"

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CHAPTER I.

THE VOLUNTEER DEAD-SHOTS AND YANKEE DOODLE.

AFTER the fall of Santiago de Cuba the work of the American army was done in the eastern end of the island, leaving nothing more for the soldiers to do except to simply garrison the captured territory. That meant a life of inactivity for thousands of adventurous spirits who preferred almost anything else to that.

Among the latter was Phil Freeman, the American drummer boy, who went to Cuba with a New York City regiment with a chum of his as fifer named Joe Bailey. He had won a national reputation under the name of Yankee Doodle, given him by the Cubans while he beat a charge at the head of his regiment in one of the hottest battles of the war.

As the enemy fled before the fierce onset of the regiment Phil beat the air of Yankee Doodle, which set the American soldiers wild with enthusiasm. The Cuban soldiers saw the drummer and heard his drum, but could not understand what caused such wild enthusiasm, and on asking about it were told:

"That's Yankee Doodle."

Naturally they thought it referred to the drummer boy rather than to the national air he was beating, and, as his daring had already excited their highest admiration, they began cheering "Senor Yankee Doodle," and under that name he became famous in both Cuba and the United States by his daring exploits in many battles, as well as personal adventures.

He had scouted for Schley and Sampson, and did splendid work for Shafter, who several times mentioned him in General Orders.

Now that all the Spaniards in eastern Cuba had laid down their arms and were being deported back to Spain, Yankee Doodle was not content to remain idle. He spent several days at headquarters, as he was not then attached to any particular command, wondering what he should do next.

At last the idea occurred to him that he could be of immense service to the cause by organizing a band of dead-shots to operate in the vicinity of Holguin, where ten thousand Spanish troops were stationed who had not been included in Toral's surrender.

No sooner had the thought occurred to him than he mentioned it to the chief of the staff, and that officer approved of it. A day or two later he spoke to the general about it, who said that it would be a very effective arm of the service, but that at present no further move was intended for some time to come in that part of Cuba; that the administration of the conquered province, the reorganization of his army, and the deportation of the Spanish prisoners would require all his attention.

Yankee Doodle then suggested that he be permitted to call for one hundred volunteer dead-shots for the purpose proposed.

Again the general shook his head, with the statement that the volunteers were in the service of the United States and under the command of officers who might object to having their men leave them.

"Then, general," said he, "if I can get one hundred volunteers from the State who are not already in the service, will you arm and feed them for the service they render?"

"Certainly I will," said the general. "But how will you pay them?"

"Easy enough," laughed Yankee Doodle.

The general looked at him suspiciously, and asked:

"Kindly explain how you will pay them."

"I'll make the Spaniards pay them."

"Not by plundering?" the general asked.

"No, general; we'll take nothing except what is legitimate capture."

"All right; go ahead," was the reply. "But it must be distinctly understood that orders from me must be promptly obeyed."

"Certainly, general. Surely you cannot imagine that I would do otherwise?"

Yankee Doodle then got several army correspondents to write to their papers, stating that he wanted one hundred dead-shots who could hit the bull's-eye three times out of five at five hundred yards.

In less than two weeks several hundred applications reached him by mail. He immediately went to Key West, from which place he wrote to one hundred of them to repair to that point immediately. Inside of three days they had joined him, and he was the worst puzzled youth in the world as he looked at them.

The majority of them were from the southwest, principally from Texas, Arkansas and Missouri. Over a score of them were old enough to be his grandfather, and he was on the point of rejecting them when one old fellow, about sixty years of age with grizzled hair and beard, laid his hand on his shoulder and said :

"See here, youngster, you wrote me to come, and I'm here. I am going to Cuba with you, or you'll be buried in the sands of this island. I'm sixty years old, forty years of which I spent roughing it on the plains, fighting Indians and rounding up cattle. I can walk further on less food and sleep than any man you've got here, and can hit the bull's-eye five times out of five, five hundred yards away, and if you don't believe me just ask any of the boys from Arizona about old Bill Atkins, and if that doesn't satisfy you, ask Bill Shafter when you get back to Santiago."

"That's all right, Mr. Atkins," said Yankee Doodle, "you are going with me, for it's tough men that I want."

"Tough," said the old man, "I ain't had a pound of meat on my bones in thirty years. I'm made up of bone, gristle, hair and skin, and if you were to cut me in two you wouldn't find blood enough to stain the knife. I've had the yellow fever, the cholera, and all the other things that make men sick, and yet I was never sick a day in my life."

"Oh, come off now!" laughed Yankee Doodle.

"I won't do it," said the old man, "and if you catch me lying in anything I have told you, I'll swallow the muzzle of your gun and let you pull the trigger."

Yankee Doodle saw that he had run up against an odd character, but in less than twenty-four hours he ran across at least a dozen men who told him that old Bill Atkins was one of the toughest men on earth, and had been known for many years on the plains as the hottest man in a scrimmage the Indians ever tackled.

He found quite a number of other odd characters, but all were cool, quiet, determined men, who made very little fuss about anything they had to do.

Out of the one hundred who had come to him, the youngest man was seven years older than he was. The reputation, though, which the press of the United States had given him, made them all eager to join him.

He explained to them that they were to be armed

with the Mauser rifle, as it was a weapon of far greater range than that used by the Americans.

"Of course," said he, "you'll have to practice a little in order to become familiar with the gun. I have known it to kill a man at a distance of two thousand yards, which is considerably over a mile. The reason we have to take that weapon is that we have nearly twenty-five thousand of them captured from the Spaniards, and General Shafter has promised me that we can have one hundred of them. Of course, you understand that we are to draw pay from the Spaniards instead of Uncle Sam; but we can have rations, arms and ammunition supplied to us whenever needed. I am under promise to General Shafter, the commander of the department, that while we are an independent command, we are to obey any order coming from him, which order, as I understand it, is merely to prevent our interfering with any plans he may have in view."

They all agreed to that, and at once prepared to go on board a vessel that was about to leave for Santiago, which place they reached in due course of time.

Their arrival at the American camp subjected Yankee Doodle to a great deal of criticism by many officers who knew him personally.

Some of them said that he had a company of scarecrows; others that he had picked up a mob without giving any thought to age or physical conditions. But when the Rough Riders of Colonel Roosevelt's command met them they found many acquaintances, who swore that they were the best fighting stock in the world.

When old Bill Atkins called on General Shafter at his headquarters the latter sprang to his feet, grasped his hand, and gave him the welcome of an old friend. He introduced him to several general officers present with the statement that he was the best shot in the West, and the hottest man in a fight he ever knew.

"Thank you, general," said the old man; "I see you haven't forgotten old friends."

"No," said the general, "I never do. I'm sorry you were not here before the city surrendered."

"So am I," assented the old fellow; "but I'm sure there is lots of fun to be had here yet."

"Plenty of it," laughed the general, "but everything around here has surrendered, except Yellow Jack."

"Yellow Jack be blowed!" said the old man. "I can look him in the face and make him ashamed of himself. He can't hurt a man who isn't afraid of him."

Forty-eight hours after the landing of Yankee Doodle's Dead-shots one hundred Mauser rifles, with cartridge belts and one hundred rounds of ammunition for each man, was issued to them.

They went out upon the hills beyond El Caney to do some target practice. A good many officers went along to watch the result, and the feats of marksmanship they witnessed were positively startling to most of them.

After two or three shots every man seemed to be

come thoroughly acquainted with his weapon. Old Bill Atkins aimed and fired at a buzzard which a dozen officers present said was at least half a mile high in the air, and sent the bullet squarely through its body.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed one of the officers; "with five thousand such men I could destroy the entire Spanish army in Cuba."

"Easily," assented Colonel Wood of the Rough Riders, "for those fellows never waste a bullet. They never pull trigger until they see what they're shooting at, and then they are sure to hit the mark."

Soon after they received their arms Yankee Doodle told his Dead-shots that he would leave to them the selection of the three lieutenants, the sergeants and corporals. Old Bill Atkins was elected first lieutenant, a man of the name Tom Bray, second and Jack Greene third.

"Now, men," said he, "we are to be governed by the same rules and regulations as the army of the United States, with all the penalties for violations of regulations or disobedience of orders. Do you all agree to that?"

"We do," they replied.

"All right, then. If we have good luck I think your pay will exceed that of the soldiers of the regular army. We are to act as far as we can with General Gomez, the commander-in-chief of the Cuban forces. I am personally acquainted with him, and the first thing we are to do is to march into the interior, hunt him up, and report to him."

They had all heard so much of the famous old warrior they were highly pleased at the prospect of seeing him.

The next day after perfecting the organization they started out northward along the railroad in the direction of the town of Enramada, the terminus of the road.

They intended to move eastward from there, so as to be out of the territory included in the surrender, as they did not wish to provoke hostilities within the surrendered district.

They had with them rations for five days, hence had no fear of suffering for lack of food. The roads, though, were a vexation of spirit after leaving the railroad town.

They soon came in contact with several small bands of Cubans who were prowling about the country more in search of food than anything else.

From them Yankee Doodle learned that there were probably no Spaniards nearer than the city of Holguin, where there was a garrison of ten thousand men. None of them knew anything of the whereabouts of the commander-in-chief of the Cuban forces, but Yankee Doodle knew that he was somewhere in either Santa Clara or Puerto Principe province, a distance of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty miles away.

It was a long, long march for them to make over rough roads in a tropical sun. He halted his men

and explained to them that it would be much better if they had horses than to make the march on foot.

"Of course," said old Bill Atkins, "but I can outwalk any horse on earth. Still, I would rather have horses for the sake of the boys; but where can we get them?"

"By going up to Holguin," he replied, "and monkeying around with the Spanish cavalry there."

"Let's do it then," said the old man, and every member of the command voted to do so.

"All right," said Yankee Doodle, "we'll make straight for Holguin."

They crossed the river Canto and struck out due north for Holguin, a distance of fifty miles from the river.

It was a beautiful, almost level country for upwards of forty miles, at which point they came in sight of the range of mountains called Cerro de Amiqui. There was a pass between the east and west ends of the range, in the northern end of which was situated the city of Holguin.

It was a city of considerable importance containing a great deal of wealth, and surrounded by a country of surpassing fertility. It was considered of so much importance by Captain-General Blanco that he had left a garrison of ten thousand troops there whilst concentrating his resources for the defense of Havana and other points along the north coast.

When within a few miles of the city the Dead-shots struck one of the main roads leading to it. Beautiful residences, with magnificent plantations and groves, were seen on the right and left.

When it was known that they were American soldiers, consternation seized upon the residents, many of whom fled to the city for protection. The Spanish commandant in the city could hardly believe the story when he heard that an American force had appeared in his vicinity.

He lost no time, however, in sending out a squadron of horse to reconnoiter.

That was just what Yankee Doodle expected, and really desired.

The Spanish cavalry soon came in sight, and attempted to run down the motley looking crowd whom Yankee Doodle had around him.

Instantly the Dead-shots filtered away into the bushes, and began picking off the Spaniards.

The latter were so terribly in earnest they never suspected the losses to which they were being subjected until nearly half a hundred riderless horses were scampering along the roadside.

Still the popping of the Mausers went on, until one of the Spanish officers, noting the destructiveness of the fire, promptly ordered a retreat.

CHAPTER II.

HOW YANKEE DOODLE MOUNTED HIS DEAD-SHOTS.

WHEN the cavalry retreated and the Dead-shots, not one of whom had been hurt, lost no time in securing the riderless horses left by them. They secured about fifty and found they were in very good condi-

tion, as they had not been doing anything but garrison duty for many weeks.

Of the enemy who had fallen only a dozen or so were killed, the others were wounded. The wounded were carefully placed in the shade of the trees along the roadside, and water brought to them from a well in the yard of a farm-house nearby.

More than half of the Dead-shots were familiar with the Spanish language, having come from the southwest as far away as the Mexican border, a region in which that language is spoken nearly as much as English.

They talked freely with the wounded soldiers, treating them very kindly, taking nothing from them but their cartridges.

What Mausers were picked up they ruined by smashing them against the rocks, a thing that excited the curiosity of several of the wounded men, one of whom asked why they destroyed them.

"Because we don't wish to be bothered with them," replied one of the Dead-shots.

"Yet you use them yourselves," said the Spaniards.

"So we do, but one rifle is enough for one man to carry in this hot country."

"Do you belong to the American army?" one of the wounded asked.

"Yes," replied Bill Atkins. "We were down at Santiago, and have run up this way to have a little fun with you fellows."

"Holguin is not Santiago," remarked one of the wounded.

"Glad to hear it," returned old Bill, "for Santiago had barbed wire fences around it."

"Is the American army coming up here?"

"Of course, it is; it's going all over Cuba. Are you fellows in Holguin going to make a fight?"

"Of course, we are."

"Good!" said the old man. "We'll get all we don't kill."

In less than an hour and a half after the retreat of the enemy, they were seen coming again several hundred strong, along the broad highway more than half a mile distant.

"Now, boys," sung out Yankee Doodle, "try your hand at long range shooting."

Every man at once sought a position from which he could get a good view of the approaching enemy and began firing. Yankee Doodle himself sat on one of the horses watching the effect of a shot through a field-glass.

"Good! good!" he exclaimed. "They are dropping all along the line! Keep it up!"

The enemy returned the fire, but their bullets went wild. They were heard whistling high over head and all around the Dead-shots.

"What's the matter with your men?" he asked one of the wounded Spaniards, who was sitting on the ground against a tree. "Don't they know how to shoot?"

The Spaniard made no reply, for he was utterly

dumfounded at the marksmanship of the quiet Americans around him. From where he sat he could see cavalrymen tumbling from their saddles at almost every shot fired by them. Many were hit who still kept their seats in the saddle.

Still the enemy pressed on until they were within the eighth of a mile of the position held by the Dead-shots on the little knoll.

By that time, however, so many saddles had been emptied that the enemy believed the woods on the left were filled with American soldiers, who were using the Mauser rifles and smokeless powder captured at Santiago.

They wheeled and dashed back to the city, carrying with them the news that a large force of Americans was close behind them.

"That's good work, boys!" sung out Yankee Doodle. "I guess there are horses enough and to spare now. Pitch in and help yourselves."

Every man of them, including those already mounted, made for the many riderless horses along the road. A score or more of them had entered a field and were quietly grazing.

They were easily secured, and in less than one hour after the fight every Dead-shot was well mounted and in possession of a brace of revolvers and holsters.

As each man had brought with him from home his own revolver, they cared little for those captured from the enemy. Many of them threw away one out of the brace captured, and filled the empty holster with Mauser cartridges.

They liked the smokeless powder, but knew that the cartridge for the Mauser was not being furnished by the United States Government, hence they were careful to secure everyone they could find.

"Say, captain," said old Bill Atkins to Yankee Doodle, "these poor fellows who are hurt ought to be taken to the city, where their friends can attend to them."

"Of course," assented Yankee Doodle, "but that is something we can't do. But I will mount one of the wounded, if you can find one able to ride a horse, and let him take a note in to the commandant of the post, telling him he can send out and get his wounded and bury his dead without molestation, if he wishes to do so."

A wounded man was soon found who said he could go in if placed on the horse, and one was soon provided for him. It was not necessary for him to take a flag of truce, so none was given him.

After his departure they fell back a mile along the road, where they stopped at a large farm-house in a fine grove of palms. The family had fled to the city on their approach, leaving everything in the house in the greatest disorder.

"Now, boys," said Yankee Doodle, "if we can find anything to eat on the place we'll confiscate it, but we'll not touch anything else. It will have a wonderful effect on the people of the city when they hear of it, as the Spaniards and Cubans have been in the habit of plundering and burning wherever they went."

They found very little to eat on the premises except in the way of fruit, of which there was the greatest abundance and delicious as well as wholesome.

There was a large spring of sparkling water within a hundred yards of the house, which the men appreciated more than anything else they found on the place.

A dozen scouts were left along the road to watch the enemy as he was looking after his dead and wounded, and during the watch they picked up a Cuban who had come out from the city for the express purpose of joining the Americans. He was an insurgent in every sense of the word, as two of his brothers, so he said, had been killed by the Spaniards.

He stated that the belief in the city was that the American army had come up from Santiago to invest Holguin. All the fortifications were being manned, and the soldiers were in the trenches waiting for the attack.

The Dead-shots laughed heartily at the news, as though they were pleased at the effect of their marksmanship on the enemy. A jollier lot of men could scarcely be found than they were at that hour. Not one man had been hurt, while they had had no end of fun during the day.

That night, with pickets and sentinels all around the old farm, they slept well without any interruption whatever.

The strangest part of the whole adventure was the fact that the news was telegraphed to Havana from Holguin that the American army had appeared before that city. Blanco telegraphed the news to Madrid, and thence it was flashed all over the world.

It created no little astonishment in Washington, where the Secretary of War telegraphed to Shafter for information on the subject. The general telegraphed back that it was probably Yankee Doodle and his Dead-shots, whereupon a great guffaw was heard all over the United States, while a million cheers probably were given for Yankee Doodle and his men.

Of course Yankee Doodle was ignorant of all that until weeks after, but he well knew, however, that he had given the Spaniards in Holguin a scare that forced them to spend a night in the trenches.

Naturally the news soon got into the city that it was a mere handful of Americans who were probably out on a raid. Still they were puzzled to account for the tremendous slaughter of the day before.

The general in command sent out a couple of regiments with a battery of flying artillery to look after the Americans. Yankee Doodle at once retired before them until he found a position on a hill densely shaded by trees, with great boulders of rock, behind which the Dead-shots could be sheltered.

Then he began peppering the enemy as they came in sight around a bend in the road a half a mile away.

As they were using the smokeless powder of the Mausers, the enemy were unable to locate them, so after losing some two score of killed and wounded,

the two regiments fell back without attempting to bring their artillery into play at all.

"Smokeless powder is a great thing," remarked Yankee Doodle, "for had we been using the old smoking powder which Shafter had at Santiago, they would have located us and made it hot for us with shells from their battery."

"Don't you believe it," said Lieutenant Greene, "for they couldn't have loaded a gun while it remained in sight of us. We could have picked off every man who advanced to the muzzle of it."

"Maybe they are breech-loading guns," suggested Yankee Doodle.

"That makes no difference; we could have picked off every man who came into view. Had we waited until the battery was well out into the road there we could have killed the horses and finally forced the soldiers to abandon the guns. I tell you these Mausers are great things."

"You bet they are," assented Yankee Doodle. "I think they are even better than the Winchester."

"I don't know that they are," said Greene. "The Winchester carries a larger bullet, and knocks a man out pretty badly when it hits him, while these Mausers, if the bullet goes straight makes a mighty small hole."

"Well, it's better to wound a man, thus putting him out of the fight and giving him a chance to recover, than to kill him."

When the enemy had retreated again Yankee Doodle decided to make another advance, more for the purpose of puzzling the enemy by his audacity than anything else.

They once more reached the farm-house where they had camped the night before, and found everything just as they had left it. He passed on until they came in sight of the city, which could be seen from a spur of the mountain a couple of miles away.

Through his field-glass Yankee Doodle was able to see the line of intrenchments around the town, as well as the principal buildings within it.

"What a splendid place," he said, "to plant a battery to shell the town," as he stood there looking through his field-glass.

"Yes," assented old Atkins; "if I had a battery here, and knew how to shoot a cannon as well as I do a rifle, I'd soon knock the town to pieces."

While they were on the spur of the mountain, gazing at the town, Yankee Doodle discovered a road running along the base of the range of hills in an easterly direction. Thinking that the information gathered in that vicinity would be of use to an American general when a movement on the city was made, he resolved to follow that road, and if possible, make a complete circuit of the city.

He had no sooner made up his mind to do so when the order was given and the march began. Being well mounted, they made good time, and found that the road, after going three miles, brought them within half a mile of the Spanish intrenchments.

"This is getting pretty close," he said to Atkins,

"and we are liable to get into trouble at any moment."

"That's all right, pard," chuckled the old man; "we are looking for a little trouble, and I hope we'll find it."

There were houses all along the road-side, many of them still occupied, as though the inmates had nowhere else to go.

Yankee Doodle was about to stop at one of the houses to speak to the family within, when he was fired on from one of the windows scarcely fifty feet away.

The bullet cut a hole through the rim of his hat.

"Hello!" he sung out, looking up at the window; "don't be a fool—why should you throw your own life away for the purpose of killing another?"

For answer, he saw the muzzle of a Mauser pushed through the half-closed window again; but ere it was fired a dozen of the Dead-shots blazed away, making a complete circle of bullet holes through the shutter a few inches above the rifle barrel.

The rifle was seen to drop, and a dozen of the Dead-shots sprang from their horses, burst open the door, and rushed into the house.

There they found a man lying on the floor dead, while an old woman was kneeling by his side wailing out her grief over the lifeless body.

"Why did you let him do it, senora?" one of the men asked her. "Did the fool think we would let him shoot at us with impunity?"

Ere she could make any reply, the roar of a rushing body of horse out in the road caused the Dead-shots to dash out of the house and spring into their saddles.

A squadron of Spanish horse was coming down upon them in a headlong rush.

"Steady, now, men!" sung out Yankee Doodle; "when we see them they will be in close range."

The next moment the thought occurred to him that if they fell back a couple of hundred yards they could have a much fairer sweep at the enemy as he advanced.

He was quick as lightning to act, while his men were equally quick to obey orders.

"Fall back, men, a couple hundred yards, quick!" he added; and the movement was quickly made.

They had scarcely halted when the Spanish horse appeared in sight, coming at full speed.

"Now let 'em have it, men," he cried, and the deadly Mausers began their fatal work.

The enemy advanced steadily, and at almost full speed, so that the men in the head of the column who were knocked out of the saddle were almost instantly trampled to death under the hoofs of the horses.

Suddenly four pieces of artillery on the line of the intrenchments blazed away, sending as many shells crashing through the ranks of the Spanish squadron, tearing it almost to pieces.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Yankee Doodle, "those guns were trained on us, and we got away just in time!"

CHAPTER III.

A RICH PRIZE FOR THE DEAD-SHOTS.

Two of the four shells fired from the Spanish battery exploded in the midst of the charging cavalrymen, playing havoc with them, while the other two did not explode till they struck the hillside away out on the right. One of them crashed through a small frame house, creating a panic among occupants of the other houses in the vicinity.

Naturally the cavalrymen were thrown into a panic by the terrible catastrophe, for the shells were even more destructive than the fire of the Dead-shots.

They turned and fled in great disorder, whilst the Dead-shots wheeled and went off in the opposite direction.

"We don't want to run into a hornet's nest," said Yankee Doodle, as he dashed back along the road.

"You're right, pard," remarked old Atkins, "for it don't pay to play the fool."

"No," assented Yankee Doodle; "but those fellows in that battery back there played it fine."

"So they did, but they didn't play it on us."

The Spaniards soon became aware of their blunder, and in a violent rage sent shell after shell in pursuit of the retreating Dead-shots, all of which was so much ammunition wasted, for scarcely one came within a hundred yards of them.

They kept it up, however, as long as the Americans could be seen. The latter soon got behind the range of hills when the fire from the battery ceased.

A native was found in one of the cabins near the roadside who agreed to pilot them around to the north side of the city for ten pesos. Yankee Doodle agreed to pay the price, and the fellow led off along a path through the woods nearly a couple of miles where they emerged into another road.

"Now, senor," said the guide, "this road enters the city on the east, but when you come within one mile of the Spanish line a road branches off from it, going northwest, and enters the road leading to Gibara. You can see the town all the way till you reach the Gibara road."

"Can we go clear around the city?" Yankee Doodle asked him.

"Si, senor, if you go through some fields you can strike three other roads leading out from the town, and keep on till you get back to the main road where the fight was."

"All right," said Yankee Doodle, "here's your ten pesos. Now can you tell me how many Spanish soldiers are in the town?"

"I have heard there are ten thousand, senor."

"How many big guns have they?"

"I don't know, senor, but they have them on their fortifications all around the town."

"Are there many sick men there?"

"No, senor. Holguin is a very healthy place."

Finding that the man knew very little about the situation he finally moved forward up the road, until they came again in sight of the Spanish works. They stopped on a hillside which was well sheltered by a

forest of trees, and spent a couple of hours resting and eating their dinner, at the same time enjoying the finest view they had yet had of the city.

They were quietly resting under the shade of the trees when they heard the clatter of horses' hoofs out on the road coming from the direction of the country.

Old Bill Atkins, with ten of the Dead-shots, went out into the road to intercept the party.

He found them to be a party of a dozen soldiers with two officers escorting two carriages.

"Halt!" called out the old man in good Spanish, whilst he and his ten men deployed across the road.

"Who are you?" demanded the officer in charge of the escort.

"Americans!" answered the old man.

"Charge!" yelled the officer, drawing his sword and putting spurs to his horse.

It was an easy task for the Dead-shots to dispose of them, as every shot fired took effect. It was at such close range Mauser bullets went clean through each man, who very naturally tumbled out of his saddle.

The driver of the foremost carriage attempted to wheel around in the road, as if to dash away in the direction he had just come.

"Halt there!" cried the old man, "or I'll make an end of you!"

"Don't shoot, Senor Americano!" pleaded the driver, dropping the reins and holding up both hands.

"Get down and hold your horses!" ordered Atkins.

He sprang from his seat, but instead of rushing to the horses' heads, he dashed into the bushes on the right of the road and disappeared from view. The horses, however, were not disposed to be unmanageable, though an elderly man, dressed in citizen's clothes, sprang from the carriage and seized one of them by the bit.

The next moment an elderly woman, followed by a beautiful young girl, alighted from the carriage, both evidently in a panic of fear.

The two ladies stood with clasped hands by the roadside gazing at the Americans, all of whom had then appeared in the road.

The second carriage stood still on the spot where it first stopped when halted, and from that two other men, also in citizen's clothes, alighted and joined the one with the two ladies.

Yankee Doodle quietly waited, and looked on to see how the old man would manage the capture.

As he advanced toward the first carriage the elder of the two women dropped on her knees before him, calling out piteously:

"Spare our lives, Senor Americano!"

"Certainly, senora," he answered; "there never was a time in your life when you were safer from harm than you are at this moment. Please rise to your feet and compose yourself, as Americans never make war on women."

"How about non-combatants?" asked the man who was holding the horses by the bit.

"They are not harmed either," said the old man,

"as long as they do nothing to interfere with the operations of war."

"Then you will let us pass on," said the other quickly.

"Yes, if we find no reason to the contrary," said the old man, turning and beckoning to Yankee Doodle, who was quietly standing by the roadside.

Yankee Doodle went up to where he was standing, and the old man asked him:

"Shall we let these people go on to the city?"

"Who are they?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"I don't know," was the reply, and he turned to one of the men and asked in Spanish:

"Are you connected with the army?"

"No; we are all private citizens, and these ladies are my wife and daughter."

"Do you reside in the city?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Si, senor, and I own a plantation out in the country, from which we were just returning."

"How is it that you had an escort of two officers and a dozen soldiers?"

"They were furnished me by General Luque on my application, simply to allay the apprehensions of my wife."

"What is your business?"

"I am a merchant, senor, and hearing that the American forces were approaching the city, I asked for an escort out to my country residence to bring my wife and daughter in. The two gentlemen in the other carriage are simply friends of my family."

"If you have nothing contraband of war with you," Yankee Doodle said, "you are at liberty to go on to your home, but I must first search the carriages to assure myself that you have nothing contraband with you."

"We have nothing with us, Senor Americano, save that which is private property."

"Of what does that private property consist?"

"The jewels and one trunk of wearing apparel belonging to my family."

"Have you any money?"

"A little, senor."

"Kindly open your trunk and satisfy me on that point and you may pass on unmolested."

A medium sized trunk was taken from one of the carriages, placed on the ground and opened. It was soon very evident, from the quantity of silks, laces and jewels exposed that they were a very wealthy family.

"They are very beautiful," remarked Yankee Doodle, "and doubtless of great value. You may close the trunk and lock it and give me the key," on hearing which the two ladies turned very pale and almost gasped for breath.

The trunk was locked by the man and the key handed to Yankee Doodle, who received it, and with a very profound bow handed it over to the mother of the young girl, with the remark:

"It is yours, senora."

"Oh, thank you!" exclaimed both the ladies almost in the same breath.

"Now, senor," said Yankee Doodle, turning to the man again, "is there anything else?"

"That is all senor, except my purse and watch."

"You may keep them; but the two carriages must be searched."

Lieutenant Greene, with half a dozen of the Dead-shots, went to the second carriage and found several canvas bags filled with gold coin concealed under both seats. As they were taken out and deposited on the ground, the elderly Spaniard uttered a groan.

"You see I was right," said Yankee Doodle, turning to him. "I suspected from the first that the escort had been furnished you for some other purpose besides protection to the ladies. This may be private property, as you state, and were it but a moderate amount I would let it go with you; but such a quantity of treasure carries with it a suspicion that it is to be devoted to the service of Spain."

"No, no, senor," protested the elderly Spaniard; "it is my private personal property which I have kept for years concealed in my country residence until fears for its safety induced me to remove it to the city."

"I do not doubt your word, senor," said Yankee Doodle, very firmly, "but the exigencies of the situation will force the Spanish commander to seize it for the support of his army when American forces come down upon him. As an intelligent man, you are as well aware of that fact as I am, hence it becomes contraband according to all the rules of war. We shall have to take it and devote it to the service of Cuba in her fight against Spain."

"Senor Americano," exclaimed the elderly woman, "it is private property, and we will be reduced to beggary if you take it from us. I beseech you in the name of justice not to take it!"

"Senora," said Yankee Doodle, "a Spanish officer would not only take the money, but everything else of value in your possession. I have returned to you your jewels, which no doubt are of more value than all the gold in those bags. It is the fortune of war. The simple fact that we allow you to retain everything of value that is not contraband of war, ought to convince you that we Americans conform strictly to the rules of civilized warfare. I would suggest to you, now, that you go on to your city home, and conceal your jewels where the Spanish officers will not be able to get at them. If you would escape further loss, you had better leave the city as soon as possible, if not from the island altogether."

Then turning to the elderly Spaniard, Yankee Doodle advised him to move on without further delay.

"Do you call this civilized warfare, sir?" the Spaniard demanded indignantly.

"Si, senor," replied Yankee Doodle.

"It is brigandage, sir!" exclaimed the other. "You are no better than the Cubans themselves."

"Really you don't think so," smiled Yankee Doodle. "Would the Cubans or the Spaniards have left those jewels as we have done for the use of your wife and daughter? Do you not know that money is

one of the great sinews of war, the same as powder and lead and army rations?"

"Of course, I know it," angrily answered the Spaniard; "but this is simply the private fortune of a non-combatant."

"It may be so, senor," was the reply; "but it was captured only after killing a dozen Spanish soldiers, which fact alone belies every assertion you make. Enter your carriage now, senor, and pass on without another word, or else take the consequences, for the day of argument has passed."

Without another word the party re-entered the two carriages and drove away, the merchant acting as his own driver since his coachman had taken to the woods.

As soon as they were gone Yankee Doodle turned to his three lieutenants, ordered them to count the money in the bags, and distribute to every man in the command an equal share.

It turned out to be fifty thousand dollars, which was divided equally among the Dead-shots, who, as they stored the treasure away in their belts, gave three rousing cheers for Yankee Doodle.

"Now, men," said Yankee Doodle, "you have nearly three years' pay at thirteen dollars a month in advance; we have no commissary department to draw rations from while we are away from the American army, so we may possibly be compelled to buy supplies, and in that case every man must chip in his pro rata share."

"We'll chip in right now," sung out some of the men.

"No," said Yankee Doodle, "someone would have to carry it, and in that case we'd have to furnish him with an escort to protect the treasury. Let every man be responsible for his own share, and if any of us should fall in battle his share should be taken care of to be sent to his people back in the States."

"Good! good!" they cried.

"So you see," he continued, "every member of the Dead-shots becomes a trustee and executor of his comrade, and if any one proves recreant to his trust he will be shot like a dog. We are not making a campaign for plunder, but as American soldiers we are going to strike at Spain whenever we see a chance. I am satisfied that this money was a loan to the Spanish treasury, and the commandant in the city of Holguin sent out an escort to bring it into the city. I may be mistaken, but we'll let it go at that, anyway."

"You bet we will," they all laughed.

"And now see here, boys," he added, "let me give you a little bit of advice: Don't gamble your money away, or blow it in anywhere as long as the war lasts."

CHAPTER IV.

"EVERY MAN IN MY COMMAND OUT THERE IS A DEAD-SHOT!"

As soon as each man had stored away his prize they returned to their horses, which had been left concealed

in the woods, and were about to continue their journey around the city, when Yankee Doodle discovered a great commotion along the line of the enemy's works immediately in his front. By means of his field-glass he saw a regiment of cavalry, some five or six hundred strong, coming out from the city along the road in his direction.

"Boys," he laughed, "they're coming out after that money."

"All right," they responded; "let 'em get it if they can."

"I hope they'll bring more with them!" called out Lieutenant Bray, "for I'd like a little more of the yellow stuff."

"There's no danger of that," replied Yankee Doodle, "for the Spanish private soldier rarely has any money. Their officers, though, frequently have fat wallets. Move your horses back further in the woods out of reach of stray bullets, and we'll have some fun with those fellows."

The order was very quickly obeyed, after which the men returned to the hillside, from which they had a good view of the enemy as they came along the highway.

"Now, boys, wait until they reach the top of that hill out there about half a mile away; then see to it that none of them get a hundred yards down on this side of it."

As soon as the head of the regiment was well on the crest of the hill the Dead-shots began peppering away, singly and by twos and threes, each man taking a deliberate aim before firing.

Officers and men began dropping out of their saddles, while others were seen to reel and turn back.

"Very good! very good!" called out Yankee Doodle, as he watched the effect of the firing through his field-glass. "Just drop 'em where they are!"

Crack!

Crack!

Crack! went the Mausers, and not a shadow of smoke revealed to the astonished Spaniards the location of the terrible Americans. Yet, with the dogged tenacity of Spanish character, they attempted to make a charge down the hill, in the hope of getting into close quarters with their unseen assailants.

As fast as they appeared over the crest of the hill, however, they were picked off. About fifteen minutes of that sort of thing satisfied them they had run up against the most destructive snag they had ever seen.

They retired, leaving about one hundred yards of the broad highway dotted with dead and wounded men.

"Say, boys," said Yankee Doodle, "if we were a thousand strong I believe we could take the town."

"Of course, we could," replied old Bill Atkins; "what's the matter with our taking it anyhow?"

"Oh, come off," laughed Yankee Doodle, "we can't tackle ten thousand men. If they should locate us and get our range a few shells would force us to skip out."

"Supposing they did?" replied the old man, "we could find another place and pick off a few more."

The cavalry retired behind the hill, and, a little later, a battery of four pieces on the line of intrenchments, nearly a mile away, began throwing shells along the range of hills on the right of the spot where the Dead-shots were concealed.

"Oh, Lord!" laughed old Atkins, "just watch 'em, will you? They don't even know where we are?"

"Hold on," said Yankee Doodle, "maybe they mean to throw shells all along the range."

And he was right, for after a few more rounds a shell exploded directly over their heads, several pieces of which struck uncomfortably close to some of them.

"Look out, boys," called Yankee Doodle, "get behind trees, but don't let them see you moving about if you can help it."

Inside of a couple minutes more a shell struck a tree, about twenty feet above the ground, and nearly tore it to pieces.

Three of the Dead-shots were standing behind it, one of whom was leaning against it. The concussion knocked him almost senseless, whilst another was considerably bruised by the falling limbs. Several of his comrades ran up and dragged the limb away, whereupon he sprang to his feet, picked up his rifle, and remarked:

"It will take a whole tree to kill me, boys."

The next shells that followed passed on up the range of hills, thus showing that the enemy was still in doubt as to their locality.

When the shelling had been going on for an hour the cavalry again advanced, only to be driven back by the death-dealing Mausers, with a loss of a score or more men.

"I'd give a few pesos," remarked Lieutenant Bray, "to know what those fellows think of us."

"So would I," said Yankee Doodle, "for it is an experience entirely new to them."

At that moment two other batteries along the line of intrenchments opened on the range of hills again, and four shells burst so uncomfortably close to the Dead-shots they rushed over the hill, seized their horses, led them out into the road, mounted and dashed away at full speed.

Some of the shells passed over the hill, going two or three miles beyond them.

By this time the day was pretty nearly spent, and Yankee Doodle made up his mind to find some secluded spot where they could encamp for the night.

They found it after going some three or four miles, in a densely wooded section a quarter of a mile or so off the main road.

During the night several of them who were out on scout duty, saw two squadrons of horse pass along the road, evidently in search of the Americans.

The little camp was not discovered, however, and early the next morning they were again in the saddle with a native guide, whom they had impressed into

service, to show them the way around to the Gibara road.

They reached it finally, by following by-paths that ran through several splendid estates, on which they found an abundant supply of the richest fruit.

The road to Gibara was a continuation of the great highway from Holguin to the coast. It was a means of communication for Holguin and several towns along the north coast of the province.

The commandant at Holguin was evidently afraid the Americans would get round on that road and cut off his communications, and they did. They cut the telegraph wire for a distance of half a mile or so, throwing the pieces away.

Until the wire was cut the commandant of the Spanish forces at Holguin was at a loss to locate them; then he sent out two regiments of infantry, with a squadron of horse to act as scouts.

Lieutenant Greene, who was out scouting for the Dead-shots, was the first to discover their approach. He hurried back to report to Yankee Doodle, who very promptly decided not to molest them unless he could see them at long range, as he did not wish to expose his men to any unnecessary danger.

Said he to old Bill Atkins :

"I wouldn't give one of our fellows for one hundred of those Spaniards unless in an effort to gain some particular point. We might engage with them and knock over a hundred or so at close range, and in doing so lose a few men. Nothing would be gained by it."

So they turned and rode northward in the direction of Gibara for a couple of miles, when they struck another road going westward.

"We'll follow this," said Yankee Doodle, "as our guide of yesterday said it would lead us down on the west side of the city."

A mile or two further on they struck another road leading directly south.

"I guess this leads back to the city," said Yankee Doodle to Lieutenant Bray, who was riding by his side at the time. "We'll follow it, anyhow."

They were now some six or seven miles from the city, going through a beautiful country interspersed with farms and an endless supply of tropical fruits.

Suddenly they came to a fine residence in the midst of a magnificent palm grove. A number of ladies were seated on the piazza, whilst a number of tenant families were occupying huts in the rear of the planter's mansion.

Naturally the ladies of the family were thrown into a panic by the sudden appearance of the new-comers, as they quickly saw they were not Spaniards.

The Dead-shots dashed up almost at full speed, and a number of them dismounted in front of the house.

"Have no fear, ladies," sung out Yankee Doodle in Spanish; "no harm whatever is intended you."

"Are you Senor Yankee Doodle?" called out one of the women.

"Si, senora," he replied.

"Then I am sure we will not be harmed. Do you not know me?"

Yankee Doodle sprang from his horse, walked up the gravel path that ran through a beautiful garden of flowers of every description, to the foot of the steps that led up to the veranda, gazing eagerly at the face of the young woman who had called to him.

"Ah, senora, it is you!" he exclaimed, doffing his hat and extending his hand to a very beautiful woman of apparently some thirty years of age.

She grasped his hand smilingly, saying as she did so:

"This is the home of my parents, Senor Yankee Doodle. I met you in Rio del Pinar province two months ago, when you extended to my aunt and myself the protection of a party of American soldiers against a band of insurgents who wanted to plunder if not kill us. We were then, and are yet, loyal to Spain, but I have told my parents and all my friends that the Americanos were brave, chivalrous people, who respect women wherever found."

"You told them the truth, senora," said Yankee Doodle, bowing to all the ladies on the piazza, "for we do not make war on women and children. Nor even on men, unless they have arms in their hands."

A tall, white-haired old gentleman came out from the house, extended his hand to Yankee Doodle, saying:

"My name is Andrea Castillo; and I thank you for the service you rendered my daughter two months ago. I am a Spaniard, and therefore an enemy of your country, but personally I welcome you to my home."

"Thank you, senor," was the reply. "I'm glad that I was of service to the senora, and I assure you that what I did then every man of my command would have done likewise."

"Where is Senor Bailey?" the young woman asked.

"He is out there on his horse, senora."

The beautiful young woman, whose husband was an officer in the Spanish army, ran down the steps and along the gravel walk to the gate where she called out to Joe:

"Welcome, Senor Bailey! Dismount, and come in!"

Joe was about to accept the invitation when a party of Spanish cavalry was seen coming up the road from the direction of the city.

Lieutenant Greene quickly gave the alarm, which caused Yankee Doodle to dash from the house, and break for the gate at the top of his speed.

"Pardon me, senora," he said to the young woman, as he flew past her. "There may be a fight!"

She rushed back to the house, her face white as a sheet, whilst Yankee Doodle sprang into the saddle. A moment's glance, however, told him that the enemy was only a small party of a score or so, who were cantering leisurely up toward the house.

He gave the order to charge and the Dead-shots dashed away like a thunderbolt.

The Spaniards fired a few shots and broke for cover, but in less than one minute they were entirely surrounded and forced to surrender, after a half dozen of their number had been shot down.

Among the prisoners were half a dozen officers, among whom was a colonel, a major, and four captains.

The colonel proved to be the husband of the young woman who had recognized Yankee Doodle but a few minutes before. They were led back to the house where the young wife rushed into the arms of her husband, almost overcome with fear for his safety.

"Oh, Antonio!" she cried to her husband, "I thank God you are safe! for it is Yankee Doodle, the young Americano who commands the Americanos. He saved my life once, as you know, and I am sure he will not harm you."

The colonel turned and looked at Yankee Doodle, as though very much surprised at finding him a mere youth.

"Senor Americano," said he, "I am your prisoner, yet I am in your debt."

"You are not in my debt, colonel," was the reply; "for when I protected your wife I performed the duty incumbent upon an American soldier. It is true you are my prisoner, but you will be instantly released on parole if you so desire—and your brother officers with you."

"Oh, how generous!" exclaimed several of the women.

"Thank you, senor," said the colonel. "It is a misfortune at any time for a soldier to be captured by the enemy. Of course I would prefer to be paroled than to being held as a prisoner."

"Very well," replied Yankee Doodle, "that matter can be easily attended to," and within half an hour the paroles were all signed and the officers and privates were released.

When that was done the Spanish major asked Yankee Doodle where the American army was.

Yankee Doodle laughed, as he replied:

"They are getting in position all around Holguin, major, and I guess in a week or ten days Uncle Sam will have to pay for the transportation of the Spanish garrison there back to Spain."

"Don't be too sure of that," said the major, shaking his head. "The conditions here are quite different from what they were at Santiago."

"In what way?" he was asked.

"In the absence of your fleet."

"Yes, yes," assented Yankee Doodle, "that does make a difference. All the same, when we are ready to take the city we'll do it."

"I hardly think you will," returned the major.

While they were speaking Yankee Doodle happened to turn towards the end of the piazza where he had a fine view of the great tobacco fields which stretched away in a westerly direction for nearly a mile. In the center of the field, about half a mile away, stood a huge old dead tree, on which were perched a half dozen buzzards, one of the commonest sights in Cuba.

"Major," said he, "I would like to give you an object lesson, in order that you may understand why I am so confident that Holguin will fall into our hands when we are ready to take it. You see those buzzards in yonder tree away out in the field?"

"Si, señor; what of it?"

"I will show you," was the reply, and Yankee Doodle called out:

"Lieutenant Atkins, step this way, please."

The old man sprang from his horse, entered the gate, strode up the gravel path to the piazza, saluted Yankee Doodle with:

"I am here, captain."

"Come this way," said Yankee Doodle, laying a hand on his arm and leading him to the end of the piazza, where he pointed to the old dead tree with the buzzards on it a half mile away out in the tobacco field, saying:

"I wish you to give the major here a specimen of American marksmanship that he may understand how easily we will take Holguin when we are ready to do so. Kindly knock over one of those buzzards."

The old man raised his Mauser to his shoulder, aimed and fired so quickly as to startle everyone on the piazza.

One of the buzzards dropped to the ground, as though dead before his claws had let go the limb upon which he was perched.

"Caramba!" exclaimed the major.

"Diablos!" blurted out two of the captains.

"Gentlemen," said Yankee Doodle, turning to the Spanish officers, "every man in my command out there is a dead-shot."

CHAPTER V.

A WONDERFUL SPRING.

THE astonishment of the Spanish officers at the marksmanship of the old Westerner, can better be imagined than described. Even the women on the piazza uttered exclamations of wonder. One of the strangest features of the performance was the other vultures on the tree did not leave their perches, owing to the fact that they were so far away that the report of the rifle did not alarm them. They merely stretched out their necks and looked down to the spot where lay their dead companion.

"It was an accident," said the colonel; "it could not be done again in a thousand times."

"Think so?" contemptuously remarked the old man; "let's see about that," and he raised the rifle, took a quick aim, and brought down another.

"Caramba!" gasped the little group of Spaniards, at which Yankee Doodle smiled in his quiet way, remarking to the major:

"You may call out any one you please, and he will do the same thing."

Still unsatisfied the major pointed to one of the younger members of the Dead-shots who was quietly sitting on his horse chewing a quid of tobacco.

"Let him try it," said he.

"Say, Hank," called out Yankee Doodle, "knock one of those buzzards out of that tree out there."

Hank very quietly unslung his Mauser, and without dismounting raised it to his shoulder and fired.

Down dropped one of the buzzards.

That satisfied the Spaniards, while Yankee Doodle quietly remarked :

"Buzzard or Spaniard, it's just the same—only we are not in the habit of killing buzzards. Yesterday we emptied a number of saddles a mile away, so you see that without a single piece of artillery a few hundred Americans can hover around Holguin and kill every Spanish soldier in the city who can be seen."

"It is horrible!" exclaimed one of the ladies.

"Si, senora," assented Yankee Doodle, "war itself is a horror, but it does not seem so to us at long range, for we fail to see the wounds or the blood that is shed, or hear the groans of the wounded. Now, tell me, gentlemen, what chance has Spain in this war?"

For answer the colonel turned quickly and asked :

"What about the killed and wounded Americans at Santiago?"

"I will answer that," said Yankee Doodle, "by saying that our best marksmen had not left the United States when the fighting was going on there. They are coming in now, though, pretty fast, and this is one of the instalments that are coming over on every ship. When we have a few thousand landed in Cuba the fun will begin."

"Do you call it fun, Senor Americano?" one of the ladies asked.

"Well, I wouldn't call it fun for the Spaniards, senora," laughed he; "but it does afford a bit of grim humor for us."

"Caramba!" exclaimed one of the captains; "it is Satanic amusement."

"Very true," said Yankee Doodle; "but it will continue only as long as Spain is willing to have it so. We must leave you now, with the assurance that wherever the American soldiers go the rights of person and property will be respected, and the women and children will be everywhere protected to the fullest extent of our ability," and with that he raised his hat and bowed to the ladies.

The colonel's wife ran up to him, seized his hand in both of hers and expressed her thanks in voluble Spanish for the kindness he had shown her and her husband.

"Thank you, senora," he replied; "if I have been of service to you and yours I hope it will be repaid by your defense of the good name of Americans when you hear it assailed."

"Si, Senor Americano," exclaimed the colonel, "you may rest assured that my companions in arms shall know of the generosity with which we have been treated."

Yankee Doodle then turned and walked away towards the gate, followed by grim old Atkins, remounted his horse and rode away in the direction of the city, leaving the group on the piazza still more

astonished at their audacity in so doing. That such a small force would boldly ride up in front of the intrenchments around the city seemed almost incredible.

A short ride down the road again brought them in view of the city, which lay spread out before them, looking as peaceful as though no such thing as war was thought of.

Finding another road that seemed to be a lane running between two estates, they turned into that, and cantered along a couple of miles till they found themselves in another great highway, on the other side of which was a country seat, evidently belonging to people of wealth.

It was far more beautiful in every respect than the one they had just left, for the residence was surrounded by a garden of flowers several acres in extent.

Naturally their appearance on the scene created great excitement among the occupants of the place.

"By George!" exclaimed Yankee Doodle, "this is the handsomest place I've seen in Cuba."

"Yes," assented Joe Bailey; "if I owned it I'd be willing to live here the rest of my life. But look there! The women are running away through the grove yonder. I guess they're pretty badly scared."

"Lieutenant Greene!" called out Yankee Doodle, "head off those people out there, and tell them to come back to the house, as nobody will be harmed."

With a dozen men the young lieutenant dashed off to intercept the fleeing women and children, every one of whom fell on their knees, begging for mercy on finding their retreat cut off.

"Ladies!" called out the lieutenant, "we are Americans, not Spaniards or Cubans. You are in no danger whatever, as we are not in the habit of making war on anybody but soldiers. Return to the house again, and be perfectly easy, for you'll not be molested."

They could scarcely believe him, though his kindly tones and frank manner did in a measure reassure them.

They returned to the house, where they gathered on the piazza to converse with Yankee Doodle and his three lieutenants.

"Where are the men?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"They fled to the woods, senor," was the reply.

"Well, send word to them that they may return and will not be harmed unless they show fight."

Half an hour later the owner of the place, who was a fine looking, elderly Spaniard, returned to the house accompanied by two others, who were evidently employees on the place.

The owner of the place soon became very talkative, and admitted that ever since the news came of the fall of Santiago and the destruction of the two Spanish fleets, he had been satisfied that Spanish rule in Cuba was doomed.

"But, Senor Americano," said he, addressing Yankee Doodle, "Cuba herself will be doomed if she is turned over to the tender mercies of the insurgents. They are but little better than savages, and hate all

Spaniards so intensely that the latter will either be slaughtered or driven from the island."

"I hope not, senor," said Yankee Doodle, "for I look upon Cuba as the garden spot of the world, and am satisfied that the United States will not permit it to be ruined by warring factions. We do not wish to annex Cuba, but simply to put a stop to Spanish misrule, which is so detrimental to the interests of commerce, to say nothing of the disturbance of the peace."

After further conversation the voluble old Spaniard began talking about his beautiful home and its many attractions. He asked Yankee Doodle and his officers to accompany him to a famous mineral spring on the estate a couple of hundred yards in the rear of the mansion.

They went with him to the spot and saw quite a bold spring of clear sparkling water bubbling up in a marble basin some six feet square. On drinking it they found that it was highly impregnated with a combination of minerals in which iron and sulphur predominated.

"It is the most wonderful spring in Cuba, Senor Americano," said the old man, "and hundreds of the nobility of Spain have come here to drink of its waters, to be cured of ills with which they have suffered for years. There is no spring like it in all the world, senor."

"Maybe you haven't heard of the mineral springs of America," remarked old Atkins.

"Si, senor; I have heard of them," remarked the old man; "and have seen people who visited your Saratoga; but the waters of Saratoga are stale in comparison to this."

"Saratoga be blowed," exclaimed old Bill. "It is a place where people go to dance and gamble; but if a man wants his system built up and his blood made red, his kidneys and liver renovated, let him go to the springs of the great West. Why, senor, there are springs in Arizona as yet almost unknown to the great outside world, whose waters are so strongly impregnated with life-giving virtues that men have been known to begin drinking them when mere wrecks hobbling about on crutches, soon become strong again, and finally die of old age years and years after they were given up by their physicians."

"The water of this spring has done the same," quietly remarked the old gentleman.

"No doubt," assented Atkins, "but the waters of the Arizona spring makes a man's liver so lively and healthy, that when he dies they have to take it out and kill it with a club."

"Caramba!" exclaimed the old gentleman in astonishment, while Yankee Doodle and the others burst into a roar of laughter.

"It's a fact," asserted Bill; "and the blood of a man who drinks the water continuously, makes a stain that can never be washed out; and even the cattle who drink it live so long and become so tough in old age, that the meat cannot be eaten, because no process of cooking can make it tender."

"Oh, let up, Bill!" exclaimed Lieutenant Bray, doubling up with laughter.

"It's a fact," strenuously asserted the old man. "I've seen the gravy of a roast steer so tough you couldn't stick a fork in it; and I've known a man to wear a pair of sandals, made out of the hide of a steer who drank the water of that spring, which lasted thirty years. The Apaches have been known to make shields of the hide that could turn a Winchester bullet at the close range of fifty yards. A Mauser bullet would flatten against one as though it had struck the iron side of an American war-ship."

By this time Yankee Doodle himself was as much astonished as the Spaniard at the imagination and volubility of the old plainsman.

"It must be a wonderful spring," said the old Spaniard.

"Wonderful is no name for it, senor," quietly returned old Atkins. "There are no words in the language that can really tell what those waters can do for man and beast. If you mix it half and half with whisky, a four-finger drink will keep a man hilariously drunk for a month, during which time his hide becomes so tough that it will turn a bullet like rain-drops on a duck's back."

Yankee Doodle, Greene and Bray were all broke up over the old man's description of the Arizona spring, while the old Spaniard himself seemed to be almost paralyzed.

He said no more about the virtue of his favorite spring, but gazed sadly at it like one whose dream of felicity had been rudely dissipated.

Yankee Doodle, however, turned to him with the remark:

"You have a wonderful spring, senor, for it makes us talk and laugh more volubly and hilariously than the best wine of the world could do. You see the effect of it on us."

"Caramba!" he exclaimed. "It doesn't affect Spaniards or Cubans that way."

That broke up the meeting. Yankee Doodle and the others rolled on the ground in convulsive laughter, in which old Atkins himself was the most vociferous of all. It gradually occurred to the old Spaniard that he was being guyed, and, instead of joining in the laugh, he became very angry, declaring that he had been insulted, and abruptly turned away, leaving the little party by the spring.

"He doesn't appreciate your humor," said Yankee Doodle to Atkins.

"No," chuckled the old man, "Spaniards haven't much humor in them."

"Why did you lay it on so thick?" Lieutenant Bray asked.

"Simply because he declared that this is the best spring in the world, and I don't think that is any thinner than my yarn."

"Well, we must go back to the house and let him understand that no insult was intended," suggested Yankee Doodle.

"Oh, don't make any apologies for me," said the old man. "I never apologize for a joke."

When they returned to the house they found the old man sitting on the piazza, surrounded by the ladies of his family, all of whom seemed to be in quite a state of alarm.

"Senor," said Yankee Doodle, "I see that you don't appreciate a bit of American humor, and I am very much surprised, as Don Quixote has amused Spain for three hundred years."

"I was insulted, Senor Americano," haughtily remarked the old gentleman.

"You are mistaken, senor, as no insult was intended. It was simply a bit of the rough humor of soldiers."

Instantly the old gentleman rose to his feet with a bland smile and extended his hand to Yankee Doodle.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DIFFERENCE—A MYSTERY WHICH ONLY THE DEAD-SHOTS CAN EXPLAIN.

FINDING the old gentleman pacified, Yankee Doodle proceeded to make inquiries about the topography of the surrounding country, and of his chances of finding a supply of food for his command.

During the conversation he learned that the old gentleman's name was Alva Quesada, and that he had made a fine fortune out of the spring on his place. His money was invested in city property in Holguin.

He stated that before the war he had a great many cattle on his estate, but that they had all been taken, with the exception of but a very few, by the Spanish authorities for the support of the army.

"Did they pay you for them?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"I hold vouchers for everything taken, senor."

"That's bad for you," was the reply, "for they will never be paid, for when Spain has lost Cuba she will never pay a dollar of Cuban debt. I would like to have some fresh beef for my men, for which I will pay you in gold on the spot."

The old gentleman looked at him in astonishment, and Yankee Doodle plainly saw incredulity expressed in every feature. He quietly thrust a hand in his pocket, drew out several doubloons, with the remark:

"Here is the money, senor. Have your men slaughter a beef for us and then let us know the price."

"Senor Americano," said one of the ladies of the party, "are your men going to camp here?"

"We will spend the night close by here, senora. Where we will go to-morrow I don't know. Why do you ask?"

"Because I fear when your presence here becomes known to the general in Holguin, he will send troops after you."

"Don't let that worry you, senora," said Yankee Doodle, smiling, "for if he sends any troops out we will look after them ourselves."

She was about to speak further when a cry of alarm escaped one of the ladies, who sprang to her feet and

pointed down the road where a column of Spanish cavalry was seen approaching about a quarter of a mile away.

Yankee Doodle sprang forward, bounded down the steps of the piazza, ran out to his horse, leaped into the saddle and dashed away up the road, followed by the Dead-shots.

"What in thunder are you running away for?" angrily called out old Bill Atkins.

"Simply to draw them away from the vicinity of that family there," Yankee Doodle replied, "as I do not care to have any bullets flying around imperiling the lives of the ladies."

The old man chuckled and rode along by his side, while the Spanish squadron of horse came thundering along the road in hot pursuit. They even fired at the retreating Americans, and some of their bullets flew uncomfortably close to the Dead-shots.

However, after going about three miles, Yankee Doodle suddenly ordered a halt, and told his Dead-shots to pitch in.

It was a species of warfare where the cool judgment of individuals was worth more than the best military discipline.

The Dead-shots sat quietly in their saddles and fired at the approaching enemy as though aiming at so many targets. Riderless horses were soon scampering about over the open field through which the road ran.

The Spanish officers soon saw that their force was being decimated, and ordered a retreat.

"They are trying to get away, boys!" sung out Yankee Doodle. "Keep 'em in range and pick 'em off as fast as you can."

The Dead-shots dashed forward in pursuit, some of them firing whilst going at almost full speed.

Old Bill Atkins was seen to go down with his horse, whilst two of the Dead-shots stopped and dismounted to go to his assistance.

Before they reached him the old man sprang to his feet. His horse had been shot through the head, but he himself was untouched.

"I'm all right, boys," he said. "Get me another horse."

Two of the men went after a fine horse nearby, whilst the old fellow himself chased another.

He was soon in the saddle again, and once more in the thick of the fight.

In a very little while they were again in the vicinity of the Quesada mansion, where the Spaniards sprang from their horses and took shelter in the house, to the number of about fifty.

"Hold up, boys," ordered Yankee Doodle. "Don't fire a shot at the house, for there are women and children in it."

"Then we must get out of the way of their bullets," said Lieutenant Bray.

"That's easy," and Yankee Doodle led off down the road in the direction of the city, and was soon out of sight of the Quesada residence.

When within a couple of miles of the Spanish in-

trenchments he turned off to the right, following a road which led to an immense sugar mill. It was an old stone building, with hundreds of tons of sugar stored in it, together with a great deal of provisions for the employees of the estate.

The laborers were all negroes, with overseers to direct their work. On the approach of the Americans overseers and negroes alike took to their heels and disappeared in the woods a few hundred yards west of the place.

On the south side were some thirty or forty small huts that served as homes for the laborers, where were seen nearly a hundred frightened women and children.

"Boys, we'll encamp here to-night," said Yankee Doodle, "and one of those steers hitched to that wagon out there I think will make very good eating, if he hasn't been drinking any of Lieutenant Atkins' mineral spring water."

One of the men shot the steer down, and in less than five minutes, three or four were engaged in skinning and cutting up the carcass, whilst others were making a fire in order to prepare a feast of fresh, broiled steak.

The men quietly prepared their supper, after which they placed sentinels out and stored their horses on the lower floor of the old mill, and made ready for a quiet night's rest.

The stars had scarcely appeared when the beautiful daughter of Don Quesada, in whose house the Spanish cavalrymen had taken refuge that afternoon, dashed up to the old mill on horseback.

She had passed the guard without paying any attention to his order to halt. He recognized her, however, and let her pass.

"Senor Americano!" she called out, as she reined up her horse at the door.

"What is it, senorita?" Lieutenant Bray asked.

"I have come for protection, Senor Americano. The Spanish soldiers have plundered our home and taken my father to the city as prisoner, threatening to shoot him as a traitor to Spain. They have robbed us of everything, and say they will burn the house down over our heads."

"What is that, senorita?" Yankee Doodle asked, suddenly appearing on the spot.

She repeated her story.

"Have they sent your father to the city?" he asked.

"Si, senor, but about thirty of them are still at the house, helping themselves to everything of value. When we protested they insulted us and threatened our lives."

"Lieutenant Atkins," called out Yankee Doodle, "order your men to mount at once; we'll ride over there and attend to those fellows."

In about fifteen minutes thirty-five of the Dead-shots were in the saddle, and, under the light of the stars, dashed away along the road they had recently come. In a very few minutes they were in the main road leading from the city to the Quesada estate.

The young girl rode by the side of Yankee Doodle, with Joe Bailey on her left.

When they came in sight of the mansion they quietly dismounted, hitched their horses in the grove, and proceeded to surround the house.

About thirty Spaniards were in the dining-room, feasting and drinking, having broken into the wine cellar and helped themselves to the finest brands of wine in Cuba.

Their arms were lying scattered about the house, as though they had no thought of danger.

The Dead-shots quietly entered, after stationing a few at the four windows.

As soon as the Spaniards saw them enter the dining-room, those who were seated at the table sprang to their feet, while those who were standing assayed to escape by the windows.

"Surrender!" thundered Yankee Doodle, sword in hand.

"Never!" fiercely yelled the Spanish captain, drawing his sword and making a pass at the young American.

Yankee Doodle parried the thrust, and the next moment the captain was floored by a blow from the butt of a revolver in the hand of one of the Dead-shots.

Another officer, a lieutenant, sprang through a window into the arms of the Dead-shots, who quietly proceeded to wipe up the ground with him, just for exercise.

"Just one minute to surrender, men!" called out Yankee Doodle, "or else you die!"

Every Spaniard then in the room held up his hands in token of surrender.

"That's all right, now," said Yankee Doodle, while Hank Bledsoe was disarming the captain who had been knocked down.

"Let every prisoner be brought back into this room."

Those who had leaped through the windows were brought in, trembling like men who expected instant death.

By that time the captain had pulled himself together and was held by the collar whilst Yankee Doodle addressed him.

"You are a captain in the Spanish army, I believe?"

"I am," was the haughty reply, for the fellow had been drinking heavily of the wine taken from the cellar.

"Do you command these men?"

"They belong to my company."

"Are they all Spaniards?"

"They are."

"And are you a Spaniard?"

"I am."

"I am glad to hear you say so," said Yankee Doodle, "for I wish to call your attention to the fact that I and my men are Americans. We were here on this estate some three or four hours to-day, and though we well knew that the owner of it and his family were citizens of Holguin and loyal to Spain, we did not take from

it anything of the value of a peseta. It remained for Spanish soldiers, under a Spanish officer, to insult a helpless family of ladies, plunder them of their valuables, fill themselves with wine to the verge of drunkenness, and threatening to burn the house down over their heads. That is the difference between Spanish and American soldiers. You are a typical Spanish captain, a fair representative of the Spanish army and of Spanish ideas of honor. You are simply a brute in human form!"

"I am your prisoner, sir," said the captain, straightening himself up in a haughty manner.

"Very true, but not a prisoner of war," said Yankee Doodle. "You are a prisoner in the same sense a burglar is a prisoner when caught burglarizing a house. Now, Hank, search this thief and see if he has anything belonging to the ladies of this household."

Hank proceeded to search him, while he vigorously protested.

Several articles of jewelry were found in his possession, and laid upon the table.

The young girl who had brought back the Dead-shots was called in to identify the property. She claimed that the jewelry belonged to her mother.

"What have you to say to that?" Yankee Doodle asked the prisoner.

"She lies," he answered.

"That will do," said Yankee Doodle. "Place him under guard, lieutenant."

He was very promptly hustled out of the room, after which the others were made to disgorge everything they had taken from the house. All the valuables were returned to the ladies, after which the men were marched out into the yard of the house and securely bound to prevent anyone's escaping under cover of darkness.

Yankee Doodle then entered another room where the ladies of the household were huddled in mortal terror.

"Senora," said he to the mother, "I'm going to take these men away. I would advise you to conceal all your valuables in some safe place, for after this it is quite evident that you will be looked upon with suspicion, simply because you were protected by us. I am sorry for you, and if I can render you any assistance in the future I will be more than glad to do so. It will probably never be known that the senorita applied to us for protection if you do not speak of it yourselves, as I am going to see that these prisoners will never be able to explain the mystery of their fate."

He was about to leave the room when the young girl who had sought his protection seized his hand, pressed it to her lips, saying:

"Senor Americano, we owe you a debt of gratitude, which I fear we can never pay. As long as I live I will remember the brave young Americano who saved our lives, while he had every reason to believe that we were his enemies. Take this, senor," and she drew from her finger a splendid diamond ring and placed it

on the little finger of his left hand, "and wear it in remembrance of me."

"Thank you, senorita, but I do not know your name."

"My name is Christina, the same as the Queen of Spain—Christina Quesada."

"I will keep it, senorita, as long as I live, and hope that some day I may have the pleasure of meeting you again, amid more pleasant surroundings. And now, senora," and he turned and bowed to the mother, "I must leave you."

"God be with you, senor!" exclaimed the mother; and the next moment he turned and left the room.

"Now, men," he said, "bring on these fellows, and we'll get away from here."

"All right, captain," said Lieutenant Atkins, and they moved off with the men to where their horses were hitched in the grove.

They mounted their horses and started on their return to the camp.

They had no prisoners, however, when they reached the old sugar mill, and the mystery of their fate remains a profound secret to all the world except the thirty-five Dead-shots who never afterwards spoke of it.

CHAPTER VII.

A DEAD-SHOT IN HOLGUIN AND WHAT HAPPENED THERE.

AMONG the Dead-shots was a man who had spent twenty years of his life in Mexico, where he learned to speak Spanish as perfectly as any native of Cuba or Spain. His name was Tom Hadley. He was dark like a Spaniard, with piercing black eyes and closely-cropped beard.

"Captain," said Tom to Yankee Doodle, soon after their return to camp, "suppose you let me go into the city and see what I can find out?"

"Do you think you can do it?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"I don't know. I can pass for a Spaniard, though, anywhere."

"But how can you get through the lines?"

"Slip through under cover of darkness."

"That's very dangerous business, Tom," said Yankee Doodle.

"Of course, it is, but I'm used to that sort of thing."

"Well, now, let me make a suggestion to you: Go back to the Quesada home and ask the senora, as a favor to me, to hire you as one of the employees on the place. Tell her that I sent you in order that she might afford some way for you to get into the city. I think that after the treatment she has received in the hands of the Spaniards she will be glad to assist in their destruction. If she will not agree to do so, return here at once and let me know."

The fellow was off within a few minutes and returned to the mansion where he found the ladies of the family all alone, every servant on the place having fled.

He told them he had been sent back by Yankee Doodle to serve in the character of a hired man, that he might not only protect them, but be able to watch the enemy.

As was expected Senora Quesada gladly agreed to take him into her service. She at once supplied him with a suit of clothes which was just a little bit of a livery.

Early the next morning a regiment of cavalry came out from the city to look after the dead and wounded that had fallen in the fight along the road some two or three miles beyond the Quesada place.

The officers dismounted and entered the house, but none of their soldiers were allowed to leave the ranks.

Hadley was present in the capacity of a house servant during the interview of the ladies with the officers. He heard the senora and her daughters tell them all they knew about what had taken place, but nothing was said of the protection that had been rendered the family by the Americans.

"Colonel," the senora asked, "why has my husband been arrested? What has he done?"

"It is charged against him, senora, that he gave information to the Americans."

"Who made the charge?" she asked.

"I don't know."

"It seems to me that a loyal citizen like my husband, should have received some consideration from the general. He gave the Americans no information whatever, but treated them courteously, because they had it in their power to destroy everything."

"Si, senora; and the simple fact that they did not destroy anything is a suspicious circumstance. It is believed that their leniency was the price paid for the information he gave them."

"Then he was arrested merely on suspicion, because the American officers acted as gentlemen? We were astonished at the conduct of our own soldiers when they reached here, for had we been life-long insurgents they could not have treated us worse."

The colonel made no reply, but turned to Hadley and asked if he knew which way the Americans had gone.

"They went down the road, colonel," he replied, "towards the city; and we have not seen them since."

"How is it they did not harm you?" the colonel asked.

"I made a break for the woods," he replied, with a broad grin on his face.

"On, you did, eh?"

"Yes, colonel; I had no arms, and even had I been armed I would have been shot to pieces had I made any resistance."

"So you ran away like a coward, eh?"

"Not like a coward, colonel, but like a prudent man, and the cavalry did the same."

"How many Americans were there?"

"I don't know, colonel, but there must have been two or three hundred, and a sorry looking lot they were. But they knew how to shoot."

"How do you know they did?"

"I saw them from the woods shooting at our soldiers, who fought bravely until they were ordered to retreat."

He was very humble in his manner in the presence of the colonel, answering every question with an apparent frankness that disarmed all suspicion. He remained standing in a respectful attitude until the colonel turned to speak again to the senora. Then he retired to the dining-room, where, under the guidance of one of the ladies of the family, he set out wine and coffee for the Spanish officers.

In the other room the senora asked the colonel if she would be permitted to go to the city to see her husband.

"Of course you may," said the officer, "as I know of no reason why you should not."

After partaking of refreshments, the officers returned to their command and resumed pursuit of the Americans.

As soon as they had disappeared, Senora Quesada, accompanied by her daughter Christina, entered her carriage, which Hadley was to drive, and set out at once for the city.

When they reached the line of Spanish sentinels the carriage was halted, but the officer of the guard, knowing the carriage and its occupants, allowed it to pass through and enter one of the main streets of the town.

"Which way shall I go, senora?" Hadley asked.

"To the general's headquarters," she replied.

"But I don't know where it is, senora."

"Drive straight ahead," she instructed him, "and I will tell you when to turn. You will know it by the flag flying above one of the principal hotels."

Thus instructed, he drove forward, handling the reins with great skill, at the same time keeping his eyes well employed in taking in the situation as far as he could from his position on the box.

After turning three corners he came in sight of a large hotel, above which the Spanish flag was flying. Stopping in front of the building he sprang from his seat and opened the door of the carriage for the ladies to alight.

The mother and daughter descended and entered the building, whilst he ascended to his seat again, where he sat holding the reins, as though he had spent all his life as a coachman.

A young officer who was strolling about in front of headquarters, approached him and asked if he had seen anything of the Americanos that morning.

"No, capitan," he replied, "but I saw them yesterday when they were at our place."

"How many of them did you see?"

"I didn't count them, capitan, but there must have been two or three hundred of them."

"How were they armed?"

"They had Mauser rifles, just like our soldiers."

"Did all of them have Mausers?"

"I think they did, capitan, as I did not see any other kind."

"How did they behave?"

"They were very quiet, capitan, for they seemed to be afraid that our soldiers would come down upon them at any moment. I heard one of them say that the Spanish soldiers were the only soldiers in the world they were afraid of."

That remark pleased the Spanish captain immensely, for he beckoned to several other officers, who crowded around him to hear him repeat the remark.

Hadley saw that he had struck the keynote by flattering their vanity and quietly dealt out a little more of the same sort.

It at once made him popular with them to such an extent, that any little favor would have been granted him.

After a delay of a half hour or so the ladies reappeared and entered the carriage, telling the driver to drive at once to their city home.

Not knowing where it was, Hadley drove straight on down the street until they were out of hearing of the officers, when the senora told him which way to go.

He found that the city residence of the family was even a finer one than that in the country. The mistress was welcomed by the housekeeper and a number of servants, all of whom gazed at the new coachman as though surprised at the absence of the old one.

The other coachman, however, had run away and had not since been seen. But Hadley knew instructions had been left at the country place for him to remain there, should he return, hence he had no fear of coming in contact with him in the city.

When he had an opportunity to speak to the mistress, he asked her how long she would remain in town.

"I cannot tell," she replied, "until I see my husband, as the general told us to return here and wait until we heard from him."

"Can you spare me for a few hours, senora?" he asked.

"Certainly," she replied, "but be careful, for if you are discovered we would all be ruined."

"Have no fears, senora, for I will be extremely careful in all I do and say."

He then went around to the stable and barn, where he remained a little while attending to the duties of coachman. The care of the horses did not devolve upon him, as there were two hostlers there for that purpose.

"What has become of Miguel?" one of the hostlers asked him.

"He ran away when the Americans appeared," was the answer.

"Where did you come from?"

"Havana is my old home," and with that he strolled off down the street.

In a little while he was again at the headquarters of the Spanish commander, passing by as though on a mission.

One of the officers recognized him as the Quesada coachman, and stopped him to ask more questions

about the Americans, and he again told about the same story as when they first questioned him.

Naturally he overheard a great deal that was said by the officers, who were smoking cigars and discussing the latest phase of the war. It was while he was talking with them that the officer who arrested Don Quesada and brought him to the city put in his appearance.

He was a blustering sort of a fellow, for he belonged to the company which had plundered the residence and behaved so disgracefully. He was standing by when he heard Hadley say, in answer to a question, that nothing on the place had been disturbed until the Spanish soldiers rushed into the house and barricaded it against the Americans.

"That is a lie," said the lieutenant, "for the Americans had stolen everything they could lay their hands on before we got there."

Hadley made no reply to the statement, but a major turned on the lieutenant and remarked that Senora Quesada had stated to General Luque that the Americans had not taken a single thing from the premises.

The lieutenant shrugged his shoulders, with a significance that meant :

"She lies, too."

"Senorita Quesada says the same thing," continued the major.

There was another shrug of the shoulder, whereupon the major, who was quite an admirer of the beautiful senorita, laid his hand on the lieutenant's shoulder, and asked :

"Lieutenant, do you mean to say that Senora Quesada and the senorita do not tell the truth?"

"Yes, major," was the bluff reply.

Quick as a flash the major struck him in the face with the back of his hand.

"Caramba!" gasped the lieutenant, laying his hand upon the hilt of his sword.

But he was instantly seized by other officers present, and Hadley quietly slipped away unperceived.

"I don't want to get mixed up with any fuss," he said to himself, "for I might be subjected to an investigation and get caught for lack of knowledge of things in and about the town."

He strolled about for several hours through the city, very much interested in everything he saw and heard.

He found the intrenchments well manned by soldiers who were quite well drilled and fed. There was very little sickness among the soldiers, who seemed to be very quiet and orderly as he met them in his stroll.

He entered a bodega and sat down to sip a glass of wine and talk with the woman who waited on him. She was good looking, perhaps twenty-five years of age, of a lively disposition, and apparently well disposed towards everybody.

A sergeant came in, called her by name very familiarly and ordered something to eat. She very promptly served him and then went to resume her talk with Hadley.

That seemed to displease the sergeant, who called to her to come and sit by him.

"After a while, sergeant," she laughingly answered him, as she passed him on her way to get another glass of wine for the coachman.

When she brought the second glass of wine to Hadley, the latter slipped a peso into her hand, whispering to her:

"Keep the change, senorita, for you have given me the best wine I have found in Holguin."

After that, she had no further use for the sergeant, for she well knew that none of the soldiers had much money except the officers.

The sergeant called to her again, and she asked what he wanted.

"I want to talk to you."

"Oh," she said, "I've heard you talk so much," and she shook her head as though she didn't care to hear him talk any more."

"Caramba!" he growled, rising from the table. "You will talk to me or you don't talk at all," and with that he went over to Hadley, seized him by the collar of his coat, and jerked him out of the chair with a force that sent him rolling on the floor.

Quick as a flash Hadley sprang to his feet and gave the sergeant a blow between the eyes with his fist, that sent him all in a heap at the opposite end of the room.

The girl flew to the door and shut it, to prevent the disturbance collecting a crowd.

The sergeant pulled himself together in a few brief seconds, and went at the coachman with the growl of a tiger.

Hadley knocked him right and left, till at last he had enough.

"Now, you fool, apologize to the senorita, or I will break every bone in your body! It is such as you who bring disgrace upon the uniform of Spain!"

CHAPTER VIII.

CHRISTINA VISITS HER FATHER.

THE Spanish sergeant was the worst whipped man ever seen in Holguin. When he found that his uniform did not protect him from a sound thrashing at the hands of a civilian, he apologized to the senorita, whereupon Hadley called for more wine, made him drink to the health of the king and queen of Spain, of the senorita and the captain-general of Cuba.

"Now, sergeant," he said, "here's to your good health!" and he clinked glasses with the Spaniard, shook hands with him, and was about to leave the bodega when the young woman called to him:

"Come again, senor."

"Thank you, senorita, I shall do so with pleasure."

Out on the street Hadley remarked to himself:

"I'll wager that girl knows a great deal of what is going on around this town, for I think she is very popular with the soldiers. I shall see her again."

As he had now been away several hours, he returned to the city residence of the Quesadas, going

first to the barn, where he asked of one of the stablemen if the mistress had left any message for him. On learning that she had not, he went to the rear entrance of the house, and sent one of the servants in to inquire of the senora when she would need the carriage again.

The girl soon returned with the message from the mistress that she desired to see him at once, whereupon he entered the house, hat in hand, and was shown into the presence of Senora Quesada and her daughter.

He found them both very pale and much agitated.

"Where have you been, senor?" the senora asked.

"I have been strolling about the city, senora."

"Did you go to the general's headquarters?"

"I passed by there, senora, and was stopped by a major and several other officers, who recognized me as your coachman, and asked me many questions about what had happened out at your country home."

"It was Major Ramon," she said, "and I hear that he struck the lieutenant who arrested my husband?"

"Yes, senora, I saw him slap the lieutenant's face for saying that you and the senorita had lied when you said that the Americanos had not plundered your home. I then slipped away to avoid being drawn into any trouble."

"They sent here for you," she told him, "saying that the general himself wanted to see you at once. I tremble for your safety, senor."

Hadley was a bit puzzled to know what to do or say. To refuse to go to headquarters might subject the family to a good deal of annoyance, even if nothing worse.

"Senora," said he, "I may be questioned as to where I came from, and I must tell a story which you and the senorita here must confirm. I told the men in the stable that I had come from Havana. I will say that I brought a letter to you from a friend in Havana commanding me to your service."

"Oh, that's right! that's right!" said the senora, suddenly brightening up. "I have a sister living in Havana, who is the wife of Don Emilio Anguro. She has just left Havana for Cienfuegos, with the intention of crossing over to Jamaica, and you can say that she sent you to me for employment, so if the general suspects anything wrong, and telegraphs to Havana for information the absence of my sister and her husband from the city will prevent them from finding out anything about it."

Thus armed with a plausible story he at once returned to the military headquarters, where he again met Major Ramon and told him his mistress had said the general wished to see him.

"Yes," said the major, "he wants to question you about the conduct of the Spanish and American soldiers out at Don Quesada's country residence."

He was conducted into the presence of the general, who appeared to him to be a mild-mannered sort of man, and was subjected to a most rigid examination by that officer.

He frankly admitted that on the first appearance of

the Americans he had skipped out to the woods, and that he remained concealed from the Americans until they left, after which he returned to the house to find that nothing had been disturbed. Then the cavalry appeared and the fight followed, ending with the premises being taken possession of by a company of cavalry, who barricaded the house against the Americans.

He said that he saw a party of the cavalry, some twenty in number, leave the place with Don Quesada as a prisoner for the city, leaving the captain and two other lieutenants still at the house.

That night a party of the Americans returned and made prisoners every soldier found in the house.

"What did they do with them?" the general asked.

"I don't know, general, they took them away and I have neither seen nor heard of either since."

The general dismissed him and he returned to the home of the Quesada's, where the family was soon informed that the matter would be rigidly investigated, that the circumstances were very suspicious, and that the general had good reason for questioning the loyalty of Don Quesada.

"Heaven save us," moaned senora, "for it means that my husband will be kept a prisoner until his freedom is bought at a price that will sweep away our fortune."

Hadley then understood better than ever the Spanish method of plundering the unfortunate subjects of Spain in Cuba.

"Senora," said he, "let me advise you to save whatever you can, for all that they can reach will be taken from you. What have you done with your valuables which were returned to you last night?"

"We buried them, senor, in accordance with the advice of Senor Yankee Doodle."

"Does any one know where they are buried?"

"No, senor; only my daughter and myself."

"You have done well, senora, and if the worst comes, Senor Yankee Doodle will afford you the protection of his arms if you can get to him."

"But how can we get to him, senor, as I fear we will not be permitted to leave the city?"

"It may not be so bad as that, senora. If you have any valuables here in the city that you can get at, you had better secure them at once."

"We have already concealed our jewels," she returned, "but the money in the bank we cannot get without a check from my husband, and I have already been refused permission to see him."

"Senora, if the señorita will call on Major Ramon, who struck the lieutenant when he said that both of you had spoken falsely, he may be able to obtain permission for her to visit her father in prison."

"Oh, yes, mother!" exclaimed the young girl, "I am sure the major will do what he can for us."

"Then see him at once," said the mother.

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed Christina, springing to her feet. "Order the carriage at once, senor!"

"Permit me, señorita," said Hadley, "to advise that you take with you a blank check for your father

to sign, so you can fill it out to the full amount of all the money he has in the bank. Then you can get it and place it beyond the reach of those who would seize it."

The carriage was made ready for the young girl in a very few minutes, and again Hadley drove up in front of military headquarters, where he dismounted and asked for Major Ramon.

That officer soon appeared and found Christina Quesada in the carriage, who earnestly pleaded with him for an interview with her father. The major was an ardent admirer of the beautiful young girl and at once promised to do his best to procure permission for her to visit the prison.

He re-entered the building, leaving her in the carriage. A little later he returned with a permit from the general for her to visit the prison with the major himself as her escort.

He entered the carriage, took a seat by her side, and they were driven to the military prison. Of course there was no obstacle to prevent her seeing her father, to whom she hurriedly explained in whispers the situation.

The don happened to know pretty much the exact amount of money to his credit in the bank of Holguin, so he signed a check for it, which she deftly concealed in the bosom of her dress.

She then took leave of him and returned to the outer room where the major was waiting for her. He escorted her out to the carriage and accompanied her back home.

The day was so far gone, however, that the business with the bank had to be postponed until the next day.

That evening Hadley returned to the bodega, for the purpose of again seeing the young woman and picking up what information he could.

He found there quite a number of Spanish soldiers who were drinking, smoking and eating. Before entering he looked carefully over the crowd to see if the sergeant whom he had met there in the morning was among them.

Not seeing him there he entered and quietly took a seat at a little table, where he waited until he could catch the eye of one of the three girls who were waiting on the customers.

Several minutes passed ere one of them came forward to wait on him. He asked for a bottle of the cheap wine sold in the place and the girl went to fetch it.

While she was gone the young woman who waited on him in the forenoon espied him, and came forward to greet him with a smile of welcome.

"What will you have, senor?" she asked.

"I have already ordered wine, señorita, and am sorry it was not you who is to fetch it to me, for I came back here more to see you than to drink the wine."

Just then the girl returned with the bottle and set it before him. He paid for it and the girl went away

to rejoin one of the soldiers who had long been paying her attention.

"Ah!" smiled Hadley, as he saw her leave, "she is an angel, senorita, for she has left you with me. This is for you," he continued, slipping a peso into her hand, "for I look to you for protection from the sergeant."

"*Sancti Marie!*" she laughed, "the sergeant is in the guard-house, for his face is all black and blue from the effects of his meeting with you this morning."

"What is he in the guard-house for?" he asked.

"For being drunk, senor. He kept on drinking my health after you left this morning, and the more he drank the more he thought my health needed attention."

"Did he give you nothing for your health, senorita?"

"Not a peseta, senor. What little money he had he invested in wine until he filled himself full of it. Will you have something to eat?"

"Yes, senorita; I am hungry, and will eat anything that you think would satisfy my hunger."

She hurried away to get something for him, and at the same moment the door opened and two officers entered.

One of them was the lieutenant whose face had been slapped by Major Ramon that morning in front of General Luque's headquarters.

"Oh, the deuce!" thought Hadley; "if that fellow sees me here there'll be trouble, and if I strike an officer I'll be arrested and shot."

He pulled his hat well down over his eyes, rose to his feet, and sauntered out of the bodega without waiting for the meal he had ordered.

"She'll think it strange," he chuckled, as he walked off down the street, "but I'm not going to place myself against a stone wall as a target for Spanish bullets on her account."

He met groups of soldiers out on the street, in one of which he heard them speaking of the Americanos, and in a few minutes learned that the Dead-shots had shifted around to the south side of the city again, and played havoc with a party of Spanish horse near the scene of the first fight.

"Caramba!" said one of the soldiers, "they are all around the town."

"Where are they now?" Hadley asked.

"They are everywhere, senor. They are in one place to-day and another to-morrow. Our officers tell us that they have been defeated with great loss, and we don't know how true it is; we do know, though, that hundreds of our men are killed by their sharpshooters. My regiment was out yesterday, and we lost more than fifty men while we never got sight of the Americanos at all. They use Mausers and kill us a mile away. *Caramba!* but it is hard," and the soldier shook his head as though he was at a loss to understand how such things could be.

"Is it true, senor, that Santiago has surrendered to the Americanos?"

"Caramba! How can we know? We hear many things and know not what to believe. What have you heard, senor?"

"I have heard that the city has surrendered," said Hadley, "but I don't know—I don't know."

"It can't be true, senor," said the soldier, shaking his head. "I have been in Santiago, and know that no ships in the world can pass Morro Castle; and I have been told that the intrenchments around the city are too strong for any army in the world to capture."

"I think so, too, *amigo*," said Hadley. "I was there three years ago. It seems to me, though, that the Americanos would not come here as long as Santiago held out."

"That's it, senor," assented the soldier, "for the American pigs have too much sense to try to do such a thing."

Passing on to other groups of soldiers on the street Hadley heard the same story—that the Americans had again appeared on the south side of the city, where they had had another fight with the cavalry.

He returned to the Quesada residence, where he occupied the coachman's quarters during the night, and the next morning had the carriage ready to convey Senora Quesada and her daughter to the bank as soon as that institution was opened.

Just as the carriage drew up in front of the bank one of the batteries off the south side of the town opened with four pieces, keeping it up for half an hour.

Naturally it threw the city into a great deal of excitement, as the non-combatants had no opportunity of finding out the real situation.

The senora and her daughter entered the bank and presented the check of Don Quesada, which was duly honored. The officials, however, were very much astonished at the withdrawal of almost the total amount to his credit.

The money was placed in canvas bags, amounting to many thousands of dollars, and taken out to the carriage by one of the clerks, after which they re-entered the carriage and were driven rapidly away to their city home.

CHAPTER IX.

PLAYING A DEEP GAME AGAINST ODDS.

SOON after Senora Quesada and her daughter returned to their city home the former sent for her Dead-shot coachman and told him that she did not believe that her and her daughter's lives would be safe, after it became known to the Spanish authorities that she had drawn all of her husband's money from the bank, and therefore wanted to leave at once for her country home.

"I am at your service, senora," said Hadley, "but I doubt that you will be permitted to pass the lines again unless accompanied by Major Ramon or some other officer from headquarters, and even then, if any suspicions exist concerning the money the carriage

would doubtless be searched. I would advise you to conceal it in some safe place."

"I know of no safe place in the city, senor, but out in the country it could be buried, to remain until after peace is declared."

"Then we must try to smuggle it through," he suggested; "but before doing so you had better ask permission to retire to the country. I hardly think that the major would refuse any request made by the senorita."

"Then I will go and ask permission for us to go, mother," said the young girl; and again the carriage was ordered out, and the young girl was driven to military headquarters.

There Major Ramon was again in evidence, and, at her request, interviewed the commandant of the army in her behalf.

"Why do they wish to retire to the country?" the general asked.

"I never asked her, general," the major replied, "but I suppose it is a matter of domestic convenience."

"Have her state in writing why they wish to leave the city," ordered the general, and the major returned to the carriage to report to her what the general had said.

She was quite upset, for she hardly knew what excuse to make. She was quick witted, however, and asked for pencil and paper, which the major brought out to her.

She wrote that she and her mother had left much valuable jewelry and silver plate in the country which they wished to secure and bring into the city for safe keeping, fearing they might fall into the hands of the enemy.

When the general read what she had written he smiled grimly, and at once granted permission for them to go, but under an escort of an officer and ten men.

On hearing that the young girl paled, for she instantly perceived that the soldiers would be instructed to see that the valuables were brought back to the city. She asked the major when the escort would be ready, and was told that it would be sent to the house within an hour, whereupon the carriage was driven hastily back to the town residence, where the senora was thrown into a panic on hearing her report of the situation.

She wrung her hands and moaned, saying that all was lost.

"Not so, senora," said the Dead-shot coachman, "for if Yankee Doodle is not anywhere in the neighborhood to take care of the escort I will attend to it myself."

"*Sancti Marie!*" she exclaimed. "What chance would you have against ten soldiers?"

"I am a dead-shot, senora," he replied, with a grim smile, "so you need have no fear of the result if we have to fight."

"But how can we carry this money that we have here in the house?" she asked.

"Conceal it under the seat of the carriage, senora. I will guarantee that they will not get it."

"Now, senor," said the senora, "I am trusting everything to you and your friends. Our very lives are at stake, to say nothing of the life of my husband. Should the general suspect that I had knowledge of a design to attack his escort my husband would be shot within twenty-four hours."

"We will trust to fortune, senora, to enable us to manage the matter without danger to your husband. I can assure you that confidence reposed in Yankee Doodle and his men will not be abused; that every dollar and everything else of value will be held as a sacred trust, to be safely returned to you whenever you desire it."

"I will trust you, senor," she returned, "for there is nothing else for us to do."

The money was then carefully concealed in the hollow space under the seat of the carriage, together with all the jewelry then in the city residence.

By the time that was done the escort, under the command of a young lieutenant appeared in front of the house. The senora, after instructing her housekeeper to take care of everything during her absence, entered the carriage accompanied by her daughter.

The Dead-shot coachman mounted the box and drove away, the escort under the lieutenant leading.

There was no difficulty in passing the line, and inside of an hour they reached the country home of the Quesadas.

The mother and daughter alighted and entered the house, while the lieutenant distributed the soldiers about the premises so as to strictly guard every avenue of ingress or egress.

In the house Hadley advised the senora to make a great outcry, on a pretense of having discovered that all her valuables had been stolen. By that means she would avoid the necessity of digging up the buried jewelry.

Both the mother and daughter played their parts well, and the young lieutenant evidently suspected nothing. He entered the house at the request of the mother, and was shown where her jewelry had usually been kept.

He questioned the housekeeper, who not being posted as to the burial of the treasure, could only protest that she knew nothing whatever about the robbery.

The young lieutenant after cogitating over the matter for a while, informed the senora and her daughter that they would have to return to the city. She pleaded for time to get ready, and the lieutenant granted her a couple of hours.

He seemed to be an amiable young officer, very quiet in manner, but at the same time very punctilious about obeying the orders of his superior officers.

In the meantime Tom Hadley recovered his Mauser rifle, which had been concealed in the house, and was about to leave the premises to take up a position where he could pick off the Spaniards without his identity being discovered.

Just a few minutes before he was going to slip out, he was overjoyed at seeing Yankee Doodle and his Dead-shots ride up.

The Spaniards fired a few shots and took refuge in the house, crying out :

" Americanos ! Americanos ! "

" Oh, we are lost ! We are lost ? " screamed the senora and Christina.

" Not so," said the gallant young lieutenant, " for we will fight to the death."

" Then we will all be killed," said the senorita, " so what is the use of fighting ? "

" But nobody is killed yet," said the young officer.

" See here," said Hadley, addressing the Spanish lieutenant, " honor does not demand the death of these ladies—nor even the death of yourself and your men. It is no dishonor for ten men to surrender to one hundred."

" Peace, coward ? " thundered the young officer. " I would not surrender though there were a thousand ; I will uphold the honor of Spain even in my death."

" Do you call it honor ? " asked Tom, very coolly, " to imperil the lives of these two ladies, to say nothing of the women servants in the house ? "

For answer the young officer drew his sword and made a lunge to run him through the body.

Quick as a flash Tom parried the thrust with the barrel of his Mauser, seized the young fool by the collar of his coat and the seat of his trousers and hurled him through the window as though he were nothing but a poodle dog.

There was only one other soldier in the room at the time, and he was a sergeant who was so utterly astonished at the summary proceeding of the coachman that he simply gasped out :

" Caramba ! "

" Keep quiet," said Tom, " or we will all be killed."

By that time the Dead-shots had all rushed into the house. The Spanish soldiers, being without an officer, promptly threw down their arms, crying out :

" We surrender ! "

" All right," said Yankee Doodle. " You seem to have a little more sense than the average Spaniard."

The Dead-shots picked up the Mausers and marched the prisoners out.

" Say, captain," whispered Hadley to Yankee Doodle, " have me tied up quickly, and make those Spaniards think I am to be shot for resisting when I am not a soldier. The lives of the senora and her daughter depend upon it."

" All right," laughed Yankee Doodle, and he at once ordered a file of the Dead-shots to seize and bind him, drag him out into the yard, kick him and cuff him about, and give him left-handed blessings in Spanish so that all the prisoners could hear them.

The game was well played, and the prisoners looked on trembling with fear lest the same fate should befall them.

In the meantime the old lieutenant, Bill Atkins,

led the Spanish officer up to where Yankee Doodle and his other officers were standing.

" Who have you got there ? " Yankee Doodle asked the old man.

" A Spanish officer," was the reply.

" Well, disarm him and let go of him ; he is a prisoner of war. This fellow here" (pointing to Tom) " is not a Spanish soldier, yet was bearing arms against us ; take him down beyond the spring and shoot him."

" See here, Senor Americano," protested Tom in well feigned fear for his life, " it is true that I seized a rifle to defend the home of my mistress, and when I saw the uselessness of further resistance, I was willing to surrender, but the lieutenant here wouldn't have it, so I threw him out of the window to prevent him from ordering the soldiers to fight, and thus I saved the lives of some of your men, to say nothing of the lives of the ladies and the rest of the soldiers."

" It's no use," said Yankee Doodle, shaking his head, " as you are not a Spanish soldier you had no right to be shooting at us. We can neither exchange or parole you, and the best thing that can be done with such as you is to shoot them. Take him away, lieutenant."

The old man with a file of soldiers marched him away towards the spring, leaving the young Spanish lieutenant the most puzzled man in Cuba.

" Now, lieutenant," said Yankee Doodle, turning to the young officer, " you are a prisoner of war. If you and your men will sign a parole, you may return to the city at once."

" Thank you," said the young officer ; " that is in strict accordance with the rules of military warfare."

" Of course it is. Americans do not carry on war in any other way."

" But why do you shoot that other man ? " the lieutenant asked, unable to repress his curiosity.

" As a punishment," returned Yankee Doodle, " for bearing arms against us on his own responsibility. If he is a Spanish soldier I will parole him ; if not he will be shot. Why do you ask ? "

" Because I am suspicious of the man."

" In what way, lieutenant ? "

" I doubt his loyalty to Spain, for he attacked me in the house there a while ago."

" Yes, yes," assented Yankee Doodle. " but he says you attacked him, tried to run him through with your sword, and that in self-defense he threw you through the window. Does loyalty to Spain demand that one should stand up and let a Spanish officer run him through with his sword ? "

The lieutenant made no reply and Yankee Doodle, with a grim smile on his face, added :

" You Spaniards are a queer lot, for I have never met one yet who was really possessed of good reasoning powers. We Americans believe that self-preservation is the first law of nature, and that under any and all circumstances a man has the right to fight for his life, even though condemned by the law."

Within another hour the paroles were written out

and signed, and the lieutenant and his men were permitted to return to the city with their horses, but not their arms.

After they had gone, Tom was brought back to the house, where a general jollification took place. The senora and her daughter shook hands with him, declaring that he had saved their lives by his firmness and prudence, and probably the life of Don Quesada himself.

He told Yankee Doodle all about his adventures in the city and what he had found out, which information Yankee Doodle transferred to paper very minutely, for the purpose of sending it to General Shafter down at Santiago de Cuba.

CHAPTER X.

YANKEE DOODLE HOLDS TWO SPANISH OFFICERS AS HOSTAGES.

WHEN he had finished his report to General Shafter, Yankee Doodle called up Lieutenant Bray and said to him :

" Lieutenant, here's a report of our operations ever since we left Santiago de Cuba ; I want you to take twenty-five men and ride back down there and place it in his hands. I think you can go through safely with that many men."

" I can do it with ten, captain."

" I don't doubt it," was the reply ; " but you might pick up a fight on the way, and we can do without twenty-five as well as ten. You may answer any questions the general puts to you, and assure him that with a couple of batteries and one or two regiments I could force the surrender of Holguin ; that we have passed around the city entirely, killing and wounding several hundred Spaniards, and have them so frightened that a couple of batteries would make them believe the entire American army was here. Tell him furthermore that any orders from him will be obeyed in both the spirit and letter."

" All right, captain," said the lieutenant, " when shall I be off ?"

" Just as soon as you please ; but let me suggest to you that if you come in contact with the enemy anywhere put all your wits to work to win the fight without losing a man. When you reach the south side of the city, which you ought to do within an hour or two, stop and pick off a few Spaniards at the intrenchments, if you can do so without losing any men. At the same time I will send twenty-five men on the east side, a like number on the west, while I will remain on the north side here, and, say, within two hours from now, all open fire, picking off as many men as we can for fifteen minutes or half an hour. That will leave the impression on the minds of the Spaniards that we have completely surrounded the city, and may have the effect of keeping them in the trenches for several days. After half an hour or so you can go on with your men down to Santiago."

The lieutenant had his men ready in a few minutes, as did Lieutenant Greene with a party of twenty-five who were to accompany him half way around.

Lieutenant Atkins with the same number set out for the west side, thus leaving Yankee Doodle with twenty-five men at the home of the Quesadas.

When they were gone Yankee Doodle in an interview with the mother and daughter advised them to claim that they had lost everything on the place, but did not know by whom she had been robbed. " Of course they will all say that the Americans are the guilty ones, but you and the senorita alone know where your money and jewels are," said he. " To prevent the Spanish commander from sending a force out here I would advise you and your daughter to hasten back to the city on horseback, as if seeking protection against us. By that means you may save the life of your husband and allay any suspicion that might arise against your loyalty to Spain."

" Senor Yankee Doodle," said the senorita, " I am afraid to go back to the city."

" Why so, senorita ?"

" I am afraid the lieutenant whom you paroled will make trouble for us."

" I hardly think so, senorita. Your return to the city voluntarily, (which you should do at full speed on horseback as though escaping from us,) will give the lie to any story he may tell that reflects upon your loyalty to Spain. In the meantime it may be possible for me to send one of my men through to communicate with you, but under no circumstance should you send a note to me. Whatever communication you have to make let it be verbal, then in case of capture nothing compromising can be found."

" I think that is the best thing to do," assented the senora, " and I am ready to start at any time."

In a very few minutes after that Yankee Doodle and his men withdrew in order to let the mother and daughter order two horses and dash away for the city in such a manner as to leave the impression on the minds of all the servants on the place that they were actually escaping from the Americans.

The scheme worked quite well, for the senora and her daughter were met within half a mile of the lines by a regiment of Spanish horse that had been sent out to attack the Americans.

Their horses were covered with foam, showing that they had made a desperate flight.

The officer in command of the regiment was completely deceived, as the senorita reported that over a thousand Americans were behind them. He instantly retreated behind the intrenchments, fearing to meet a superior force.

Half an hour later Yankee Doodle and twenty-five of his Dead-shots began some long range sharp shooting, in which a dozen or more Spaniards were knocked over. The same thing happened on the east, west and south sides of the town at the same time.

It was a busy day at military headquarters in the city, as officers were flying in every direction, in expectation of an attack in force. The firing on four sides of the town naturally led the enemy to believe that the Americans were all around them in considerable force. At the same time they were greatly

puzzled over the fact that no batteries had been planted to shell the town.

But so deadly was the fire of the sharpshooters the Spaniards lay flat on the ground behind their intrenchments, not being able to see a single American anywhere.

After annoying the enemy half an hour in that manner Lieutenants Atkins and Greene rejoined Yankee Doodle at the Quesada place.

There they spent the night without any molestation from the enemy.

The next day, however, a considerable force marched out to the Quesada place. Yankee Doodle kept out of their way and was not seen by them. To his astonishment, the Spaniards burned down the splendid residence, after which they returned to the city.

"Great Scott!" he exclaimed, "that was one of the finest residences in the province, if not on the island. I cannot understand why they should destroy it, unless it is for the purpose of laying the blame of it at our door."

That night the Dead-shots encamped again on the estate. A great storm came up, lasting for three or four hours. The Dead-shots found shelter in the deserted tenant houses on the estate, but their horses had to stand the pelting of the rain.

A little before the storm ended, two of the Dead-shots, who had been acting as scouts, came in, bringing with them Senorita Quesada, who was bare-headed and drenched with rain.

"Great Heavens, senorita, is it you?" Yankee Doodle exclaimed on seeing her.

"Yes, senor," she replied; "I have come to you for protection, for I know not whether my father and mother are yet alive."

"In Heaven's name, senorita, what has happened?"

"Senor, when General Luque found out that my mother had taken from the bank all the money belonging to my father he demanded of her what she had done with it. She told him that it had been taken from her out here by you Americanos, but he would not believe it. He charged that she had taken it to the Americanos, and ordered her arrest at once. I escaped in the darkness just after they seized mother, and when the storm was at its height I passed through the line without meeting any one. And now, Senor Americano, if you and your brave men do not protect me, there is no protection for me on earth."

"Senorita," said Yankee Doodle, "I pledge the life of every man in my command to protect you from any harm threatening."

"Thank you, senor, I have learned to trust you Americanos implicitly. I am very much wearied, for I have walked all the way in the pelting storm," and she looked as though utterly exhausted.

A room in one of the huts was given up to her, in which there was a little bed, and she retired and spent the night there.

The next morning two of the women belonging on the place were found and brought to the hut to attend to her wants. Her wet clothes were hung out in the hot tropical sun, and in another hour they were dry enough for her to wear again.

When she appeared the Dead-shots greeted her with a rousing, old-fashioned American cheer.

She gave them permission to kill cattle on the place, and herself partook heartily of their rude fare.

"Senor," she said to Yankee Doodle, "from this day I renounce allegiance to Spain, and intend to cast my lot with the Americans, even though I may have to leave Cuba on that account."

"It is the Spaniards who will have to leave Cuba," said he, "and that, too, at a very early day. I will send word to General Luque that whatever befalls your parents, worse shall happen to Spanish officers who may fall into our hands."

"Don't do that, senor," said she, "until we know whether or not they intend any harm to my parents, as a threat always has a bad effect on a Spaniard."

"You are right, senorita," assented Yankee Doodle. "We will try to find out what has happened to them by sending some one of your servants into the city, that is if you know of one who can be trusted."

"Alas, senor, I know not whom to trust."

"Then I will send one of my own men through tonight."

During the day a column of Spanish horse left the city on the west side, for the purpose of sweeping around towards the north, in the hope of catching some of the Americans off their guard. But old Bill Atkins, with a party of his men, happened to be out in that direction. He permitted himself and half a dozen men to be seen. A company of Spanish horse numbering sixty men dashed after him in hot pursuit.

The old man quickly sent word to Yankee Doodle, who lost no time in going to his assistance. When the Spaniards were about a mile away from their main body, the Dead-shots turned on them and began putting in some of their deadly work.

The fight lasted about twenty minutes, during which the enemy was completely routed and a dozen men captured, including a Colonel Du Valles and Major Ramon.

On finding two officers of such prominence among his prisoners Yankee Doodle conceived the idea of holding them as hostages for Don Quesada and his wife, and he lost no time in communicating with the senorita, who was back in the woods with an escort of five of the Dead-shots.

"Oh, senor!" she exclaimed on hearing it. "It will save their lives, if they yet be alive."

She accompanied him back to the road where she saw the two officers as prisoners. She knew Du Valles almost as well as she did Major Ramon, both of whom expressed their astonishment at finding her with the Americans.

"How did you get here, senorita?" Major Ramon asked.

"I escaped from the city during the storm last night, major," she replied.

"Escaped? What do you mean, senorita? Are you not a prisoner, too?"

"No, major; but my father and mother are. They are in the prison in Holguin, and I would have been there had I not escaped in the darkness of the storm. It is to the everlasting shame of Spain that such things should be done by her officers and soldiers. When General Luque found out that my mother had drawn all of our money out of the bank he ordered our arrest, thus forcing me to seek protection at the hands of the enemies of Spain."

"I cannot understand it, senorita," said the major, shaking his head.

"No honorable man can, major," said she. "I cannot understand it myself, unless I accept the explanation of Senor Yankee Doodle here, who has tendered me the protection of the American arms. He says it is simply an effort on the part of the general to possess himself of my father's fortune. I cannot conceive any other motive, for surely the loyalty of my parents to Spain could not be doubted. You, major, belong to the general's staff, and surely ought to know something about it."

"I know very little, senorita, and am deeply pained at finding you in such a trying situation. Were it in my power to render you any service I would gladly do so, even at the cost of life."

"Major," said Yankee Doodle, who was standing by, listening to what was said by the prisoner and the young girl, "you can render the senorita very important service."

"How so?" the major asked.

"By writing a note to General Luque informing him of the capture of the colonel and yourself, and stating that both of you would be held as hostages for the safety of Don Quesada and his wife."

The major turned pale, for he knew something about the very obstinate character of the Spanish commander.

"I will do what I can, Senor Americano," he replied; "but regret the necessity of it."

"It is the fortune of war, major; but you Spaniards are famous for this sort of thing, for Spain is the only country claiming to be Christian that makes war on women and children."

"Pardon me, sir," said Colonel Du Valles, very haughtily, "you have no right to thus insult prisoners of war."

"Facts are stubborn things, colonel," said Yankee Doodle, shaking his head. "You know as well as I do that Captain-General Weyler's order forcing Cuban families to leave their homes and concentrate in the cities, at the same time refusing them rations, has been the direct cause of the death of over one hundred thousand women and children. It would have been less cruel to stand them up in rows and shoot them down with Mauser bullets than to have

compelled them to die by the slow process of starvation. We Americans are here in Cuba to-day more to put a stop to that sort of thing than anything else. You may consider it insulting to remind you of these things, but they are cold, hard facts which will be the everlasting shame of Spain for ages to come. The only redeeming feature about the whole business is that it will bring about the expulsion of Spain from every foot of territory in the Western Hemisphere. Now, major," he added, turning to Major Ramon, "if you will kindly write the note to General Luque I will send it by one of your men who was captured with you."

The major took from his pocket a note-book and pencil and hastily wrote a short note to the Spanish commander, which he handed to Yankee Doodle to read.

The latter read it and passed it to Senorita Quesada.

"That is right, senor," said the young girl, as she returned it to him, after which she smilingly remarked to the major that she never dreamed that they would ever be placed in such a position.

"Nor I either," said he; "but if I am to suffer for the blunders of others I shall not regret that it was in your service."

"Thank you, major," she returned. "I hope it will not come to that, for you can suffer only after my parents have perished."

CHAPTER XI.

SOME LESSONS FOR THE SPANIARDS.

ALL the prisoners were released except the two officers, and they returned to the city afoot. The note that was sent to General Luque said that a flag of truce, sent out on the road leading to the Quesada estate, would be met by one from the Americans. The bearer of the note was instructed to say that only one man with the flag was necessary to return an answer to the one he had delivered.

No answer was expected until the next day, yet a strict watch was kept along the road from the time that the prisoners took their departure.

The two officers were kept under a strong guard, but were permitted to converse with any of the men whenever they chose to do so. They were extremely anxious to find out the strength of the American forces in the vicinity of Holguin, but to all their questions only one answer was returned:

"There are enough of us to take the city whenever we choose to do so."

"Why is it that you use no artillery?" the colonel asked of Yankee Doodle.

"Our artillery hasn't come up yet," he replied, "for there are no roads in Cuba over which a battery can be drawn, which is another thing that ought to make every Spaniard blush, for you have neither wagon roads nor railroads to any amount on the island after three hundred years of Spanish occupation."

"How do you expect to take the city without artillery?" the major asked.

"We can take it with our Mausers," said Yankee Doodle, whereupon the major laughed.

"Major," Yankee Doodle said, "you've lost several hundred killed and wounded during the past week in defense of the city, and yet we haven't fired a shot from a piece of artillery. You can make the calculation yourself as to how long you can hold out at that rate."

"What are your losses?" the major asked.

"Very heavy," was the reply; "two men wounded, none killed."

The major smiled again, remarking:

"That is what you Americanos call bluff, isn't it?"

"No, it is what we call the plain, blunt truth."

Both the prisoners smiled sardonically, whereat Tom and his two lieutenants chuckled as if very much amused.

"Say, major," said Yankee Doodle, "if you live to get back to Spain, which I hope you will, the greatest service you can do your country would be to teach her soldiers how to shoot."

"Do you think we don't know how to shoot?" the major asked.

"No, but you can't hit anything. Any boy can point a gun and pull the trigger. I do not believe that in the siege of Santiago a single American soldier was hit as the result of a deliberate aim. Your men fired in volleys, and lost at least a thousand shots to every man hit; whereas if one of our men draws a bead on another anywhere within range of the gun that he uses he is sure to hit him."

Both the prisoners were incredulous.

"Major," said Yankee Doodle, "you have on a gold watch, I see. I will wager you the value of it in gold coin that you can't yourself hit a target the size of a man five hundred yards away once in five shots."

"I'll take that bet," said the major, who had a good deal of sporting blood in him.

"What's the value of your watch?" Yankee Doodle asked him.

"I gave two hundred pesos for it, senor."

Yankee Doodle took that amount from his belt, handed it over to Colonel Du Valles with the request that he hold the stakes.

A distance of five hundred yards was stepped off to a tree almost as large as a barrel. The major was told that if he could hit that tree anywhere from the ground to the height of six feet with the Mauser he would be accounted a winner.

He selected a Mauser, examined the shells, and then deliberately aimed and fired at the tree.

"Please examine the target," said he after firing one shot.

"We will do that," said Yankee Doodle, "after you have fired the five rounds."

He fired four more shots after which they examined the target.

They found two bullet marks, one seven feet, and the other eight and a half feet above the ground.

"You have lost, major," laughed Yankee Doodle.

"Yes; so I have," he assented, "but I am not sure that the gun was all right," and he held it up and examined it very carefully.

"The gun is all right," said Yankee Doodle, "the fault lies with the marksman; and to prove it to you, just tear a leaf out of that little note-book in your pocket there and stick it up on the tree. You may then take the gun back to the spot where you stood when you fired, and call out any man in my company whom you please, and let him try it."

The major tore the leaf from his note-book, handed it to Lieutenant Atkins, who fastened it to the tree by means of three pins, after which they returned to the place where the major stood when he fired. A man was called out from the Dead-shots whose general appearance was not such as to indicate any special skill in anything.

It turned out, though, that the fellow was one of the best shots in the command.

The major handed him the rifle, which he raised to his shoulder, aimed quickly and fired.

"Don't put 'em all in the same hole," said Lieutenant Atkins to the Dead-shot. "Just scatter them over the paper a little so they can see where each bullet went."

The young marksman fired five times very quickly.

"Now let us go and take a look at the paper," said Yankee Doodle, and they made their way to the target again.

"Caramba!" exclaimed the colonel, as he saw the five holes in the paper.

"Now you can understand," said Yankee Doodle, with a broad grin on his face, "that I am not boasting when I say we can take Holguin without any artillery. I don't want your watch, major, and you're welcome to keep it, for it is worth that much to me to demonstrate to you that one American soldier with a Mauser in his hand is worth ten Spaniards with the same weapon. I would now like to make another bet with you: that out on a plain field, a mile square, I can take one hundred of my men and whip one thousand Spaniards if they will stay in the field thirty minutes."

"You will have to make that wager with the general," said the major.

"All right, I will let you bear the challenge to him, if he is sensible enough to exchange Don Quesada and his wife for yourself and the colonel. And about that exchange, the sooner it is effected the better it will be for all parties concerned."

"That is a matter with which we have nothing to do," said the colonel, very haughtily.

"No," assented Yankee Doodle, "and more is the pity."

It afforded the Dead-shots a good deal of amusement to astonish the two officers by many things they did and said. The latter were not only astonished at the marksmanship of the Dead-shots, but at the extreme familiarity that existed between the officers and men. Of all armies in Europe or America the

Spanish officers are the haughtiest. They are more strict on questions of military etiquette than in discipline or tactics. They are all brave to recklessness, but lamentably ignorant of the real science of war.

When Yankee Doodle told them that the Spanish fleet at Manila Bay had been shot to pieces and sunk by Dewey's fleet without losing a single man, they flatly refused to believe him.

"When you go back to Spain," he added, "you will probably learn the fact if you will look over the papers published at the time."

Night came on and the watch along the road for the flag of truce was kept up by relays of scouts until sunrise. Yankee Doodle waited until noon, and was about to shift his position when a man on horseback bearing a white handkerchief on the point of his sword came in sight.

He proved to be a lieutenant of Spanish cavalry.

Yankee Doodle and Lieutenant Atkins met him and asked what he wanted.

"I wish to see the American general," he replied.

"I represent the American general," said Yankee Doodle.

"What is your rank?" the Spaniard asked.

"My rank is that of captain."

"General Luque declines to treat with any one but your general."

"Does he send a Spanish lieutenant to treat with an American general?" Yankee Doodle asked indignantly.

"I am sent to represent him," said the Spaniard.

"Well, return to him, and tell him that the American general will deputize a lieutenant to treat with him. And you might say, furthermore, that that sort of monkey-business is what is ruining Spanish interests in Cuba. If he wishes to exchange Don Quesada and his wife for Colonel Du Valles and Major Ramon, all he has to do is to send them out here under flag of truce, and the exchange can be made in five minutes."

"I am instructed to inquire whether the Americans hold the Senorita Quesada or not?"

"That is none of his business," said Yankee Doodle, and with that he turned away, leaving the officer in the road and disappeared in the woods.

The lieutenant returned, bearing the flag of truce until he reached his line.

The colonel and major were grievously disappointed when they learned the result of the meeting, for they began to fear that their lives were in danger through the course pursued by General Luque.

On the other hand, Yankee Doodle suspected that the Spanish commander had delayed the exchange for the purpose of keeping him where he could be surrounded by Spanish troops. To make sure, however, of his safety, he shifted his position to a point five miles east of the Quesada estate, leaving five scouts to watch the road for another flag of truce.

A few hours later three different detachments of Spanish troops appeared on the scene, coming from three points of the compass. They moved swiftly,

but Yankee Doodle and his Dead-shots were nowhere to be found.

The scouts came in and reported what had happened, whereupon Yankee Doodle placed the two prisoners under a guard of five men, and with the rest of his command hastened to occupy a position on the crest of a wooded hill that overlooked the road by which they were to return to the city.

"Now, men," he said, "I want some of your best work to-day. Don't let up on those fellows as long as one is within range."

There were perhaps twelve hundred Spaniards in the force when the three detachments had come together, and when they appeared along the road, the seventeen Mausers in the hands of the Dead-shots began barking at a distance of about a third of a mile.

It lasted for more than half an hour, during which time nearly three hundred Spaniards had been killed or wounded. The enemy returned their fire, and bullets whistled all through the woods on the hill.

Two of the Dead-shots were slightly wounded, but they did not retire from the fight in consequence.

At last the Spaniards put spurs to their horses and dashed into the city, in a very much demoralized condition.

One of the wounded Spaniards was placed on a horse and allowed to return, bearing a note to General Luque from Yankee Doodle.

"GENERAL,"—the note ran, "I have two other officers belonging to your army prisoners in my hands; as they are wounded, both severely, I beg leave to include them in my offer to exchange Colonel Du Valles and Major Ramon for Don Quesada and his wife. The dead and wounded of your army now lying in the Gibara road you may bury or remove without molestation from my command. (Signed)

"YANKEE DOODLE, captain."

The general was in a furious rage when he received the note, for by this time he had learned through his scouts and spies that the only force of Americans in the vicinity of Holguin was a mere handful of mounted men, probably less than one hundred in number. That such an insignificant force should thus beard him in his den was galling indeed.

He again sent out all of his cavalry and three regiments of infantry, with instructions to scour the country and sweep the daring Americans from the face of the earth.

Yankee Doodle with his prisoners moved during the night around to the south side of the city, where, early the next morning, he captured an entire company of cavalry that had been out on a foraging expedition, together with a dozen wagons filled with provisions that had been gathered in the country.

Among the prisoners captured was a lieutenant and twelve men whom he had paroled only a week before. They were easily recognized by the Dead-shots, and on being questioned were told that the general refused to recognize the parole and had ordered them into service again.

"What!" said Yankee Doodle, "won't recognize the parole of an American officer? He needs to be taught a lesson."

The men were led out and shot in the presence of the other prisoners, who were then paroled and sent back to the city.

Just before they left Yankee Doodle addressed them, saying that they could now see that General Luque was responsible for the shooting of those men.

"You can tell him that every man paroled will be shot if captured again with arms in his hands. You can say further to him that I have now five of his officers on my hands, who will be held until he is ready to exchange Don Quesada and his wife for them."

The forces sent out on the north side of the city to destroy the daring Dead-shots spent two days in the fruitless task, which enabled Yankee Doodle and his men to get the captured rations out of the way at a safe distance, after which he returned to the task of again worrying the garrison.

He shifted around to the east side, and thence to the Gibara road. There he captured a Spanish courier, who was bearing dispatches from the commandant at Gibara, the port of entry for Holguin on the north coast.

The dispatches stated that an American gun-boat and a couple of war-ships had attacked the town and forced its evacuation, and that the Spanish force was then on its way to Holguin.

"Now, boys," said Yankee Doodle, "we'll make it hot for those fellows coming down this way from Gibara," and he proceeded along up the road nearly fifteen miles.

It was a good road, as it connected the city of Holguin with its port.

As he advanced he selected numerous spots where his men could get in some deadly work without being exposed to the fire of the enemy.

"We'll make 'em sick," he said.

After going about fifteen miles they met a squadron of Spanish horse in advance of the Gibara garrison on its march to Holguin.

A furious fight ensued, during which the Spaniards fell back on the main body for assistance, leaving more than forty of their men dead and wounded in the road.

When the main body came up they were some three thousand strong, but the Dead-shots posted on a high hill that overlooked the road inflicted upon them a loss of more than a hundred and fifty men.

They held the position until two batteries which opened on them forced them to retire.

Two hours later they were again in front of the enemy, in a place that had been previously selected, and again they inflicted heavy loss upon them.

Suddenly a shell exploded almost in the center of their position, killing three of the Dead-shots outright and wounding two others.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

YANKEE DOODLE was appalled at the catastrophe of the exploding shell, and burst into tears as he saw the mangled bodies of his brave fellows.

"It is awful," he said to Lieutenant Atkins, "for I have always tried to avoid any loss whatever. I have even retreated in the face of the enemy, allowing him to laugh at us rather than expose the lives of my men unnecessarily. Particularly have I striven to avoid the fire of artillery, for I know something of the destructiveness of an exploding shell. I have known a company to be almost wiped out by a single shell in the trenches of Santiago de Cuba. We'll bury these poor fellows at once and then proceed to avenge them as far as we can. But hereafter when they open on us with shells we must get out of the way, unless fighting in the line with the main army, which we are not doing at present."

The enemy was allowed to pass on within half a mile of where the three Dead-shots fell. The brave fellows were being buried while the enemy was yet in sight. A detail was made to carry the two wounded ones and the others, now reduced to less than sixty in number, proceeded to follow up the rear guard of the retreating Spaniards and pick them off.

All the afternoon the deadly work went on until the rear guard finally became panic-stricken. They had turned and charged repeatedly on the Americans, only to be beaten back by their deadly fire.

As they rushed on the infantry the latter received the impression that a large force had routed the rear guard and was pressing down upon them.

Their officers tried to hold them in hand and make a stand, but so many of them fell under the deadly aim of the Dead-shots they finally broke and fled, crowding upon those in front, spreading confusion and terror through the ranks.

The last five miles of the march to Holguin was the retreat of a disorganized army that might be compared to a mob. As they rushed into the city the garrison itself caught the fever of demoralization under the impression that an army of Americans had landed at Gibara and was pursuing the fleeing garrison at that port.

Such was the panic at the time that a single battery, after firing a few shots, might have forced the surrender of the city. Yankee Doodle had hoped that during the rout he could have captured some of the artillery, but all his efforts to do so proved unavailing.

As it was, for a distance of nearly fifteen miles, the dead and wounded Spaniards lay in sight of each other along the road, together with many horses and several hundred rifles.

It seems almost incredible that a small body of less than seventy men could have performed such deadly work, and created such a panic in a force of from eight to ten thousand trained soldiers, and that, too, with a loss of only three killed and two wounded.

It demonstrated, however, that when men are taught to hit whatever they aimed at their power was doubled, trebled and quadrupled in the day of battle.

Notwithstanding the fact that his scouts had reported the American force as less than one hundred, General Luque, after hearing the report of the losses of the Gibara garrison, flatly refused to repose any confidence in the veracity of judgment of his scouts.

He swore that they were unworthy of belief, that a loss of a thousand men killed and wounded gave the lie most emphatically to the stories they had brought in.

The next day after the Gibara garrison reached the city in a demoralized condition, Yankee Doodle again sent in a flag of truce which was stopped just outside the line by a captain of infantry.

"What do you want?" the Spaniard asked.

"I have a note to General Luque, offering an exchange of prisoners."

"Wait there then until I have orders from the general."

"All right," was the reply; "hurry up."

The note taken to General Luque was simply a repetition of the offer to exchange the captured officers for Don Quesada and his wife.

"Captain," said the general to one of his staff officers, "take this note and make the exchange at once."

The captain took the note, read it carefully, and then hurried away to execute the order.

He sent word out to the lines that the bearer of the flag of truce from the Americans should be informed that the exchange would be made within an hour, provided the officers, who were prisoners in their hands, were produced.

"It will take me two hours to produce them," said the bearer of the flag of truce, who was Lieutenant Greene of the Dead-shots.

"Very well," said the captain; "we will give you two hours."

Lieutenant Greene hastened back to inform Yankee Doodle that the exchange was to be made within two hours.

"All right," was the reply, "I'll have them here."

At the end of two hours Yankee Doodle had the five prisoners on hand, two of whom were wounded and were borne on litters. A carriage was seen coming out from the lines, preceded by an officer bearing a flag of truce.

Yankee Doodle hastened to the carriage to greet Don Quesada and the senora, after which he saluted the officer bearing the flag of truce and remarked:

"Take charge of your friends, captain, while I will do the same with Don Quesada and his lady. I have tried to treat the prisoners as prisoners of war should be, and what inconveniences they have had to submit to was the result of circumstances and not of design."

"Captain," said Colonel Du Valles, as he was parting from Yankee Doodle, "I hope that if we ever

appear on the same battle-field we may meet and cross swords."

"Nothing would give me greater pleasure, colonel," said Yankee Doodle. "I am not old enough to grow a beard, but I am amply able to take care of myself against the best swordsman in your army."

"Captain," said the major, "accept my thanks for your courtesies during my stay with you."

"Thank you, major; better luck next time," laughed Yankee Doodle.

The major then went to the carriage to congratulate the parents of Christina Quesada on their release from prison.

"Thank you, major," said the senora, rather haughtily. "I and my people have been loyal to Spain all our lives, but the rest of my days shall be spent in prayers for the success of her enemies the world over."

"I am sorry, senora," said the major, "that events have taken the course that they have, and deeply regret that you have been made the victim of untoward circumstances. Personally I assure you of my continued esteem and respect for you and yours, and hope that we may meet again when the friendship of the past will be continued in utter forgetfulness of the troubles of the present time."

"I don't know that we shall ever meet again, major," said the senora, "as we may go to the United States to live until Spain's soldiers are driven from Cuba. They have burned down my home and have sought to despoil us of every peso we have in the world."

The carriage was then driven away by one of the Dead-shots, who took the place of the Spaniard who had driven it out from the city. They returned to the Quesada estate, where, in one of the tenant houses, Senorita Christina met her parents with a glad cry of welcome.

The mother told her how she had suffered a thousand deaths, in anxiety and suspense, on her account on the night she escaped from the city.

"It was awful, mother," said the daughter, "but I knew the brave Americanos would take care of me, and do all in their power to defend me. And, mother, they have been like brothers to me; they can be trusted to the fullest extent, for they are all men of honor where women are concerned. They have burned down our beautiful home—that is, the Spaniards did, and now we have no home except the one in the city, to which we dare not go."

"Senor," said Yankee Doodle, addressing Don Quesada, "the Spaniards have evacuated Gibara, and the town is now in possession of the American troops. Your money, together with the valuables belonging to your family, is safe, and, if you wish it, we will escort you to that port, where you can either reside or find some way of taking shipping, either to the United States or to some of the British islands."

"Thank you, Senor Yankee Doodle, we will accept your offer. Where we will go we will determine when

we reach there. Under no circumstances will I ever again consent to live under the flag of Spain."

"I can't blame you for that, senor. We are ready to start any time you wish."

"Thank you, senor. As soon as I have seen some of my servants for the purpose of giving instructions we shall be ready to go."

"You had better lose no time then," advised Yankee Doodle, "for I think the Spaniards will make a desperate effort to recapture you and your family."

Within an hour he had seen two of his servants, whom he instructed to remain on the place and look after the estate as well as they could under the circumstances.

They were told that on the appearance of the enemy, to escape to the woods and remain there until they had gone away again. He also informed Yankee Doodle that all the cattle on his place should be driven northward and tendered to the American troops at Gibara as a present from him in consideration of the protection he had received from them.

"All right," said Yankee Doodle; "I thank you for the gift in the name of the American soldiers."

The Dead-shots were then ordered by Yankee Doodle to round up the cattle as quickly as possible. The boys went at it with a whoop, for many of them had served as cowboys in the Far West and were at home in that sort of business.

In a little while more than one hundred head of cattle were rounded up and driven out on the main highway leading northward. There were twice as many more on the estate, but they had been scattered far and wide and the boys had no time to go in search of them.

Driving the cattle on ahead, the carriage containing the mother and daughter followed close behind them. Quesada himself mounted a horse and rode along with Yankee Doodle, carrying a Mauser rifle across his knees.

"I would like nothing better than to get a shot at them," he remarked to Yankee Doodle, "for I wish above all things to completely sever my allegiance to Spain."

All along the road lay the dead and many wounded Spaniards, who had fallen in the running fight of the day before. Behind them, not more than a mile away, followed a body of Spanish cavalry sent out by General Luque to bury the dead and look after the wounded.

As the Americans rode along many of the wounded cried piteously for water, which the Dead-shots freely gave them as long as the supply in their canteens held out.

They were assured that their comrades were coming out after them and were then but a short distance away.

It was a long, tedious march, as the cattle for the first ten miles gave them a great deal of trouble, on account of the dead and wounded Spaniards lying in the roadway.

They would shy off to the right or left, thus forc-

ing the boys to round them up again nearly a dozen times. Finally they passed the spot where the fight began on the day before, and after that they had no more trouble.

It was nearly midnight when they reached the outskirts of Gibara, where Yankee Doodle halted and sent Lieutenant Greene in with scouts to report to the officer in command of the place.

The lieutenant found that it was in possession of marines who had landed from two or three war-ships. He was taken before the commander who was a lieutenant from one of the vessels, to whom he told his story.

"A thousand welcomes to Yankee Doodle!" exclaimed the naval officer; "we are glad to meet him, as well as to have the assistance of his men in holding this place. I can assure you that all our men on shore, as well as those on board the ships, will welcome the generous gift of Don Quesada, for at all times fresh beef is preferable to salt junk."

The naval officer rode out to meet Yankee Doodle and welcome him and his Dead-shots into the town.

The cattle were driven into an inclosure and a guard placed to see that none got away.

In the meantime the carriage was driven into one of the hotels of the place, which, from an American standpoint, was really unworthy of the name. For all that, though, the mother and daughter were very happy in the knowledge that they were safe for all time from the rapacity of the Spaniards.

The next day nearly every officer from the war-ships called on the Quesadas to pay their respects, as well as to thank them for the gift of fresh beef.

But when they heard the stories of the exploits of Yankee Doodle and his Dead-shots since they left Santiago de Cuba, they shook their heads and frankly said it was a hard thing for them to believe.

"Oh, come off now," said Yankee Doodle, "if Dewey destroyed the entire Spanish fleet at Manila without losing a man, why should you doubt that we have done as well on shore? It was the deadly marksmanship of the men behind the guns on board of Schley's fleet that destroyed Cervera's Squadron with a loss of but one man killed. It was the marksmanship of my men that inflicted the loss of a thousand killed and wounded in the vicinity of Holguin. I think you fellows on the sea must be getting a little jealous of we land-lubbers."

"Oh, not at all," laughed one of the officers, "but this sort of thing, you know, has all the appearance of a fish story, whereas the wonderful work of the navy is known to all the world."

"Very true," assented Yankee Doodle, "but wait till you hear the report from Spanish sources of our work around Holguin. The truth will come out in the course of time."

And he was right, for after the surrender of Holguin, which quickly followed the negotiations for peace, the reports of the Spanish officers acknowledged a loss of over a thousand men killed and wounded.

But they claimed that the American forces appeared in mysterious numbers, as though they had risen from the ground like spectres in a night.

They could never be located until they struck some terrible blow, inflicting heavy loss upon the garrison.

There being no vessels from the little port of Gibara to the United States sailing at that time, Don Quesada and his family resided there for many weeks, and under instructions from General Shafter, which were brought to him by Lieutenant Bray, Yankee Doodle remained there with his Dead-shots until further orders should be sent him.

During that time he was feasted and entertained not only by the officers of the vessels in port, but by all the prominent families residing there.

A lieutenant in the navy of the name of Markham, a graduate of the Naval Academy at Annapolis fell in love with Christina Quesada, and paid desperate

court to her. She resisted him for a time, apparently in the hope that Yankee Doodle himself might kneel at her feet. But he advised her as he would have counseled his own sister, to accept the young lieutenant, as his family in the United States was equal to hers in Cuba in point of wealth and social standing.

She finally married him and thus the Quesadas became more intensely American, if possible, than if they had been born under the folds of the Stars and Stripes.

The Dead-shots refused to disband, but remained at Gibara under the command of Yankee Doodle, patiently waiting for orders that would send them again into the field against the enemy.

And it is there we leave them, after their splendid campaign, in which they triumphantly marched and fought from the shores of the Caribbean Sea at Santiago de Cuba to the wave-washed shores of the Atlantic on the north.

[THE END.]

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